Memories of Home

By

Mary D. Brine

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"What is the Summer made of?"—*Page* 19.

MEMORIES OF HOME

Poems and Pictures of Life and Nature

BY

MRS. MARY D. BRINE

AUTHOR OF "MOTHER'S SONGS," "GRANDMA'S ATTIC TREASURES," "PAPA'S LITTLE DAUGHTERS," "FOUR LITTLE FRIENDS," "HITHER AND THITHER," ETC.

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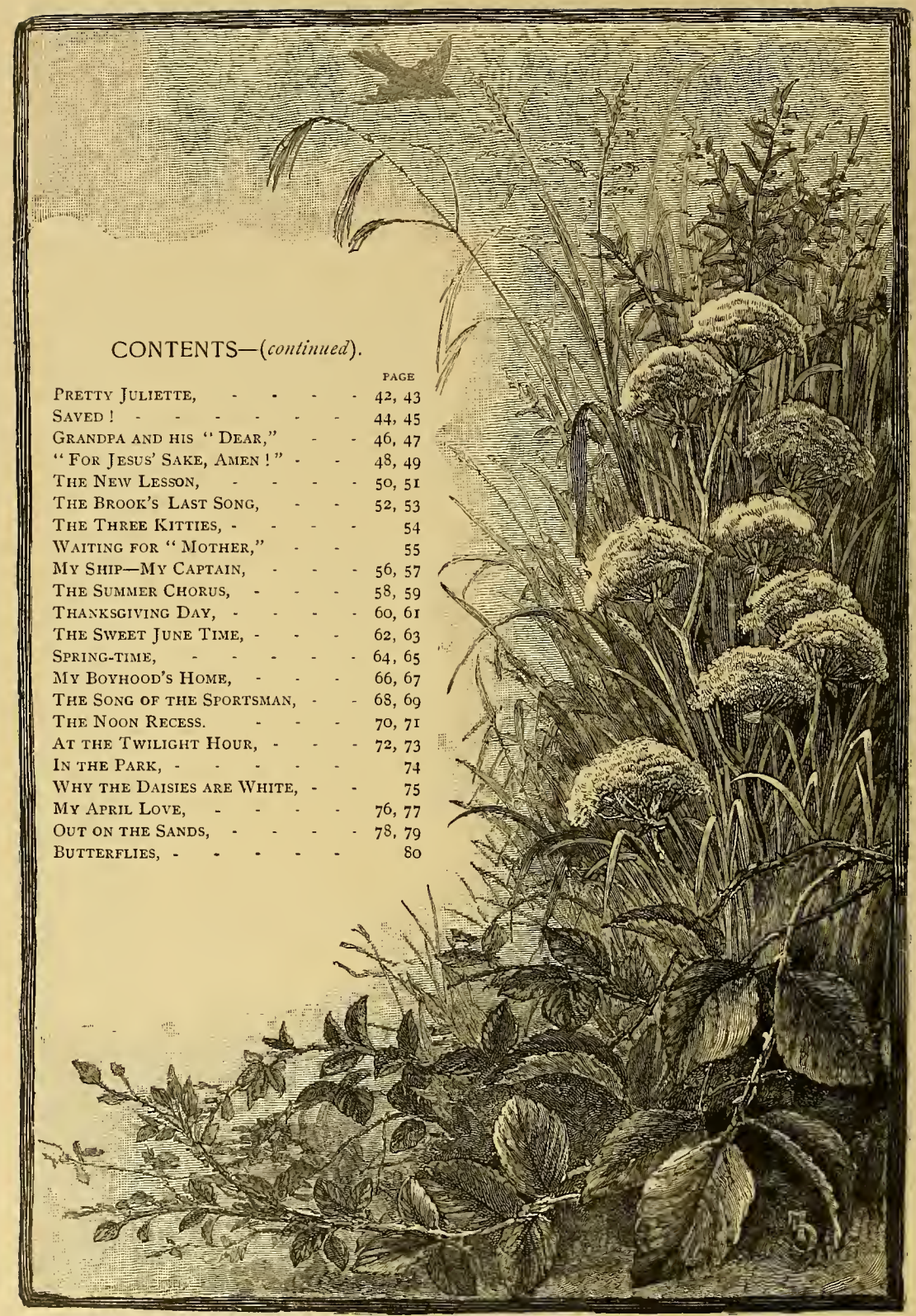

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After the Shower.

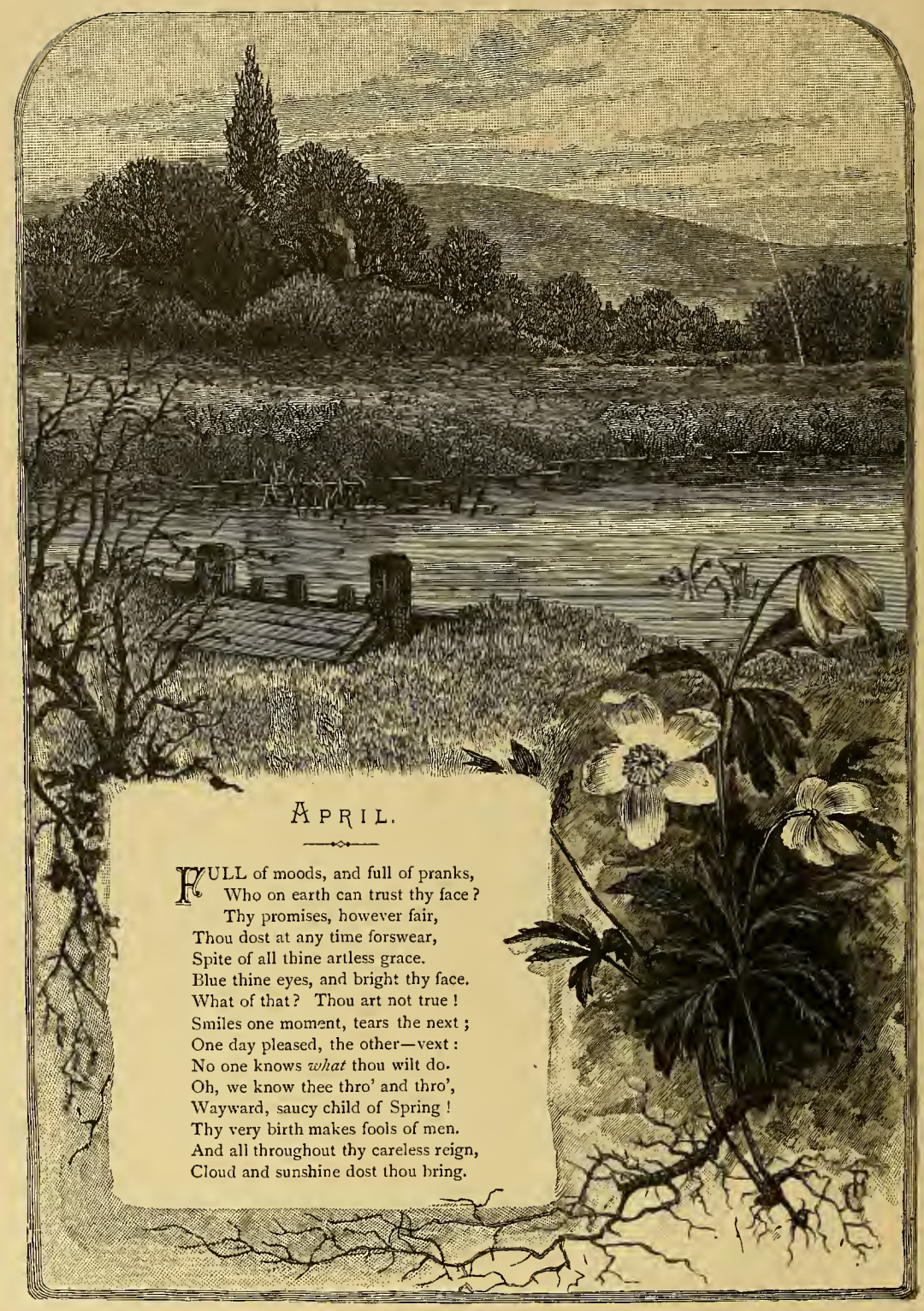
A TENDER sky—half tears, half smiles; a sobbing breeze; green meadows where
A thousand diamonds glittering lie; and in the soft, sweet summer air
The fragrance of reviving flowers, which lift their drooping heads again,
And the sweet scent of woodland ferns—after the welcome summer rain.
From every bush, and shrub, and tree, the quivering raindrops hang and fall;
And twittering birds their wet wings shake, and plume themselves afresh, and call
Each other from the woodland groves; while the glad earth grows bright again,
And sunshine floods the landscape o'er—after the welcome summer rain.
With sense of life renewed and fresh, the world seems fairer in our eyes,
And Nature, jubilant and new, smiles 'neath the light of joyous skies.
Back to the fields the farmer goes, and toil suspended, once again
Goes on, with vigor twice renewed—after the welcome summer rain.

Gathering Flowers in May.

WELCOME, welcome, beautiful May!
Welcome thou, and thy garlands gay!
The earth is glad with thy sunny smile,
And sweet with the breath of new-mown hay.
Lavish of all thy glory, thou:
See! thou hast flung thy treasures down
Till the earth is gay in her new-found wealth,
And jubilant in her floral crown.

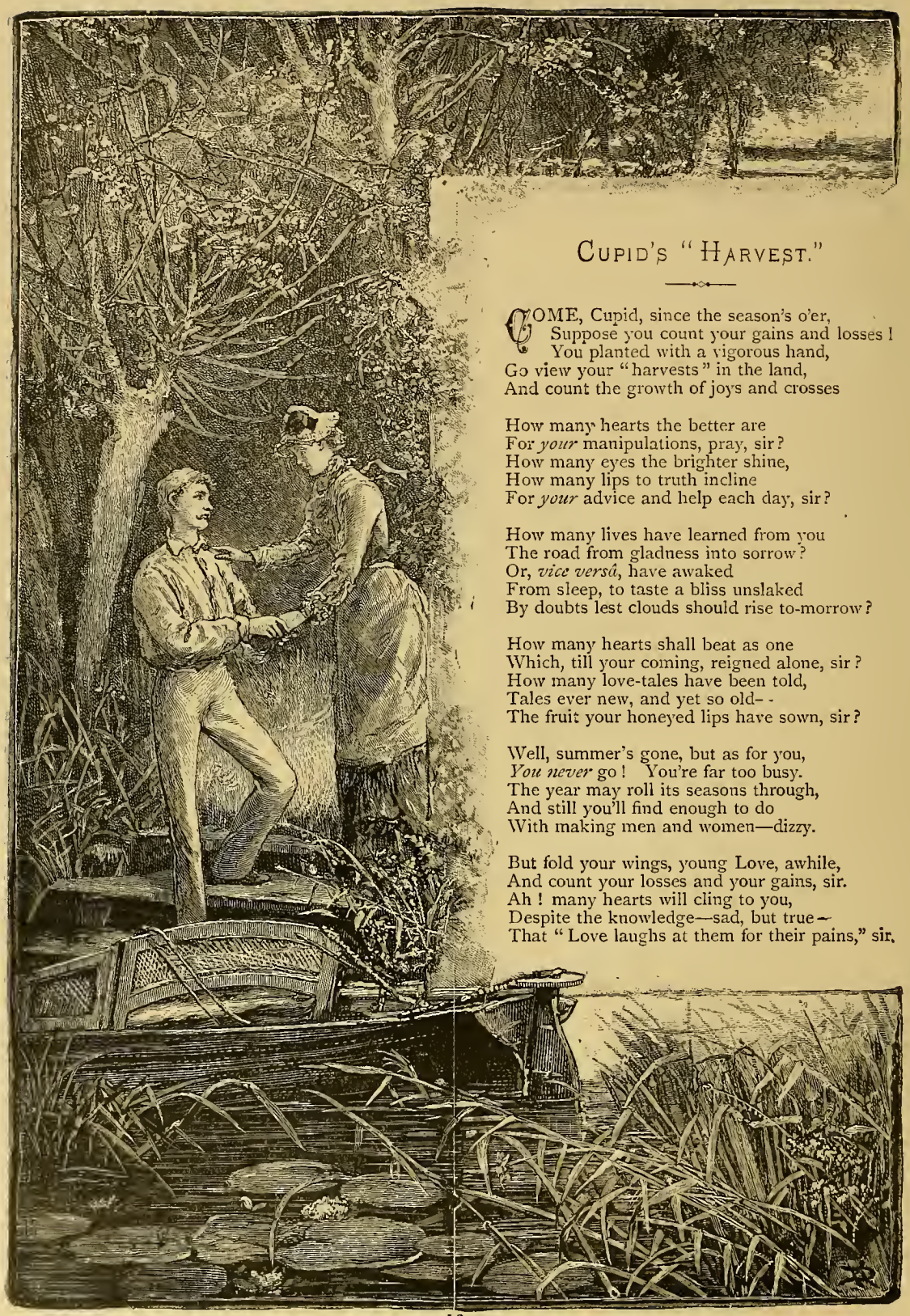
Fairer thou art, oh, beautiful May!
Than even thy sister, whose reign is o'er,
The blue-eyed April, who wept and smiled,
And softened the earth so cold before.
She sang of thee, and our hearts were glad
With thoughts of the joys sweet May would bring;
We longed for thee and thy merry hours,
Oh, thou most beautiful month of spring!

There are sounds of pleasure o'er all the earth;
There are sweet birds singing in bush and tree;
There are laughing voices, and songs of mirth,
And joyous faces to welcome thee.
There are busy fingers in every field
Plucking thy treasures rich and rare;
Oh, May! so lovingly bountiful,
Welcomes must greet thee everywhere.



APRIL.

FULL of moods, and full of pranks,
Who on earth can trust thy face?
Thy promises, however fair,
Thou dost at any time forswear,
Spite of all thine artless grace.
Blue thine eyes, and bright thy face.
What of that? Thou art not true!
Smiles one moment, tears the next;
One day pleased, the other—vext:
No one knows *what* thou wilt do.
Oh, we know thee thro' and thro',
Wayward, saucy child of Spring!
Thy very birth makes fools of men.
And all throughout thy careless reign,
Cloud and sunshine dost thou bring.



CUPID'S "HARVEST."

COME, Cupid, since the season's o'er,
Suppose you count your gains and losses!
You planted with a vigorous hand,
Go view your "harvests" in the land,
And count the growth of joys and crosses

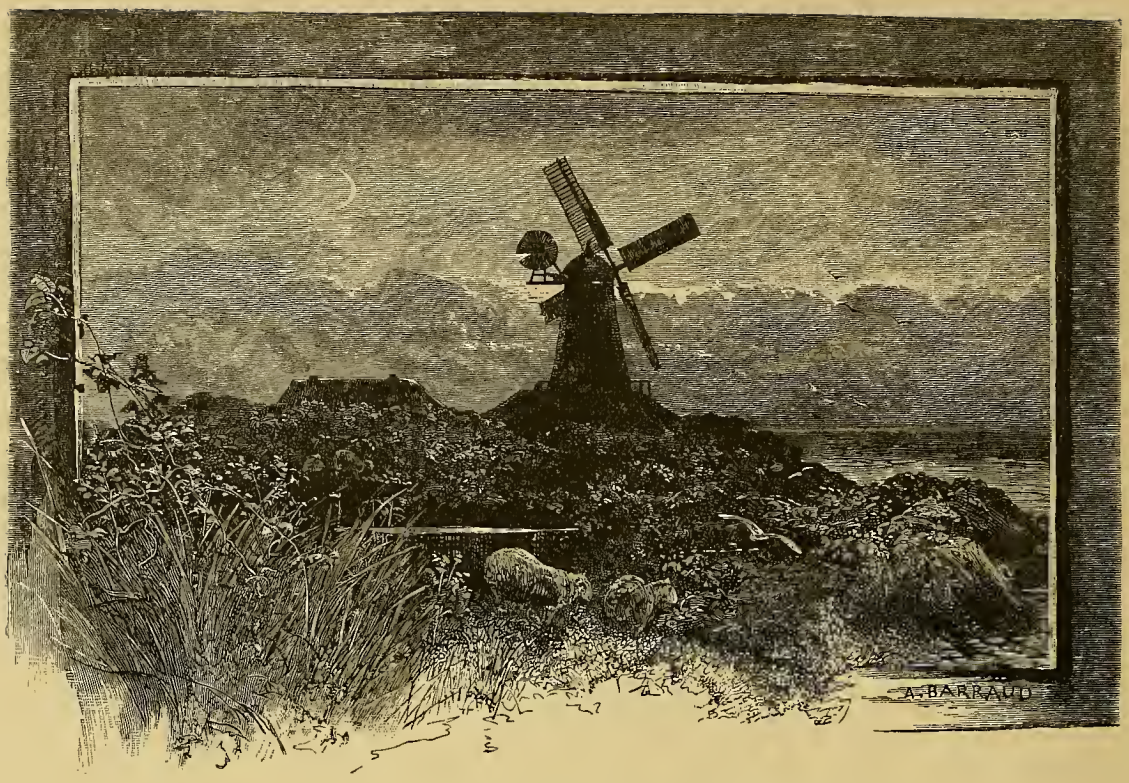
How many hearts the better are
For *your* manipulations, pray, sir?
How many eyes the brighter shine,
How many lips to truth incline
For *your* advice and help each day, sir?

How many lives have learned from you
The road from gladness into sorrow?
Or, *vice versâ*, have awaked
From sleep, to taste a bliss unslaked
By doubts lest clouds should rise to-morrow?

How many hearts shall beat as one
Which, till your coming, reigned alone, sir?
How many love-tales have been told,
Tales ever new, and yet so old--
The fruit your honeyed lips have sown, sir?

Well, summer's gone, but as for you,
You never go! You're far too busy.
The year may roll its seasons through,
And still you'll find enough to do
With making men and women—dizzy.

But fold your wings, young Love, awhile,
And count your losses and your gains, sir.
Ah! many hearts will cling to you,
Despite the knowledge—sad, but true—
That "Love laughs at them for their pains," sir.



What has Become of the Beautiful Day?

WHAT has become of the beautiful day?
Where have its bright hours gone?
It seems but a moment since, rosy and gay,
The glad summer morning was born.
And now the soft shadows of evening are here;
The day slips away, and the night cometh near.

How have the glad moments gone, do we ask?
What has become of our day?
Ask the warm sunshine, whose golden rays fell
And stole the bright hours away.
Ask the soft clouds that far up in the sky
Helped the dear hours so lazily by.

Go ask the birds in the stately old elms,
Who sang away the sweet hours.
Look for the bees, and perchance *they* will tell
Who idled the day 'mongst the flowers.
And what say the leaves of the grand forest trees,
Which have whispered and frolicked all day with the breeze

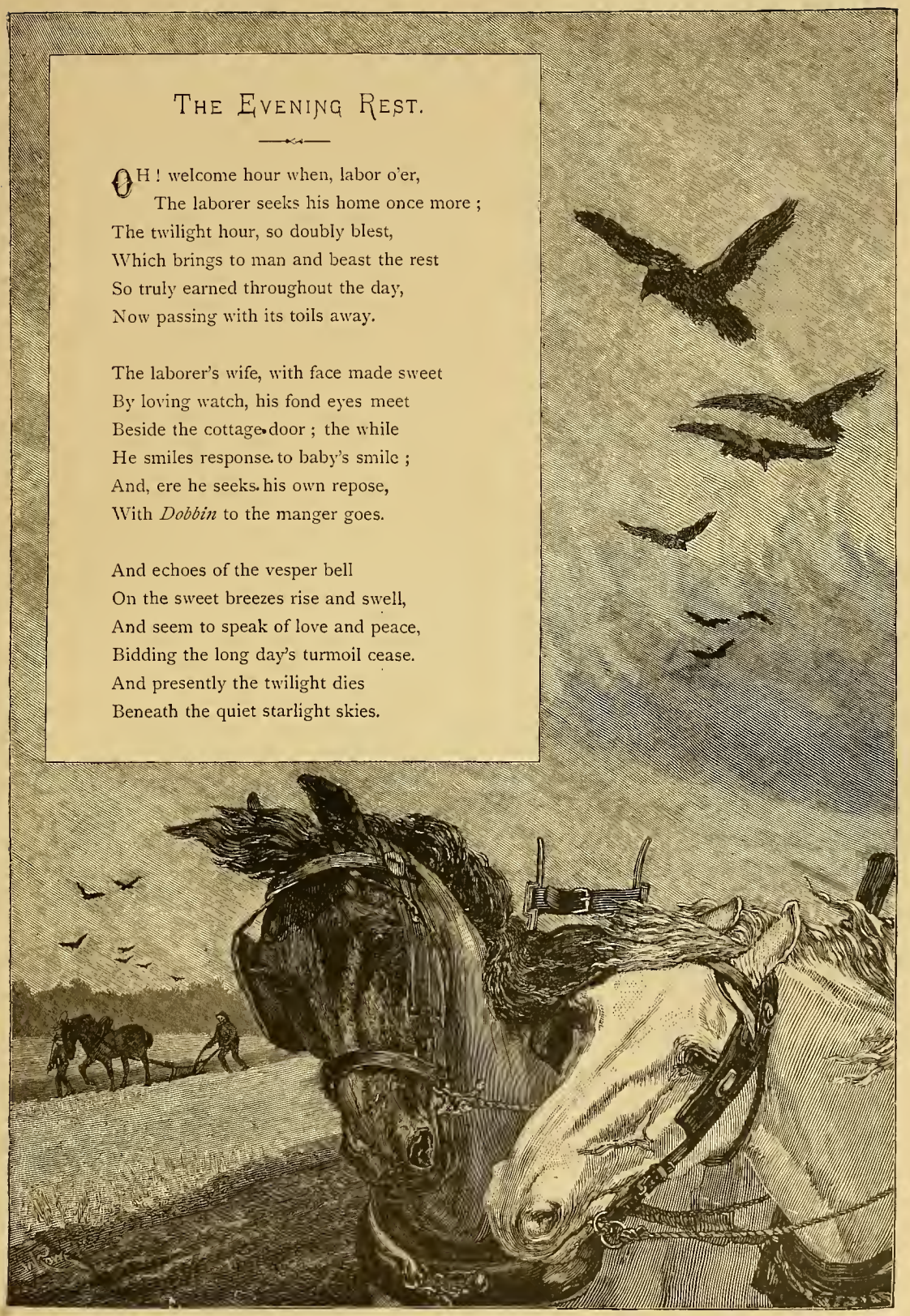
Oh! who can tell how the bright day has gone?
'Midst sunshine, and shadow, and play,
'Midst humming of bees, and the singing of birds,
Hath vanished the beautiful day.
But the peace and the joy which it gave to my heart
Thro' clouds and thro' sunshine shall never depart.

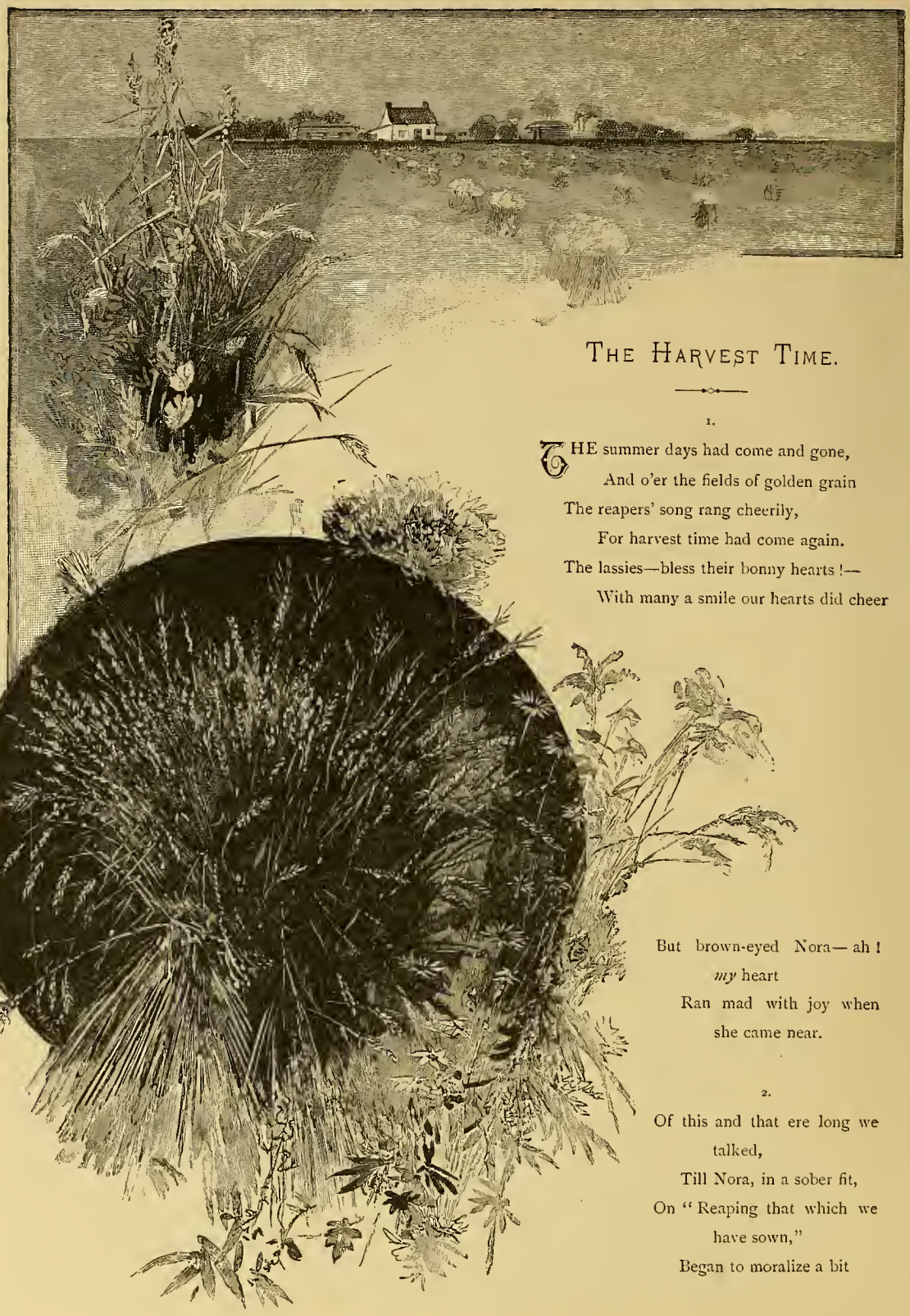
The Evening Rest.

OH! welcome hour when, labor o'er,
The laborer seeks his home once more;
The twilight hour, so doubly blest,
Which brings to man and beast the rest
So truly earned throughout the day,
Now passing with its toils away.

The laborer's wife, with face made sweet
By loving watch, his fond eyes meet
Beside the cottage-door; the while
He smiles response to baby's smile;
And, ere he seeks his own repose,
With *Dobbin* to the manger goes.

And echoes of the vesper bell
On the sweet breezes rise and swell,
And seem to speak of love and peace,
Bidding the long day's turmoil cease.
And presently the twilight dies
Beneath the quiet starlight skies.





The Harvest Time.

1.

THE summer days had come and gone,
And o'er the fields of golden grain
The reapers' song rang cheerily,
For harvest time had come again.
The lassies—bless their bonny hearts!—
With many a smile our hearts did cheer
But brown-eyed Nora—ah! *my* heart
Ran mad with joy when she came near.

2.

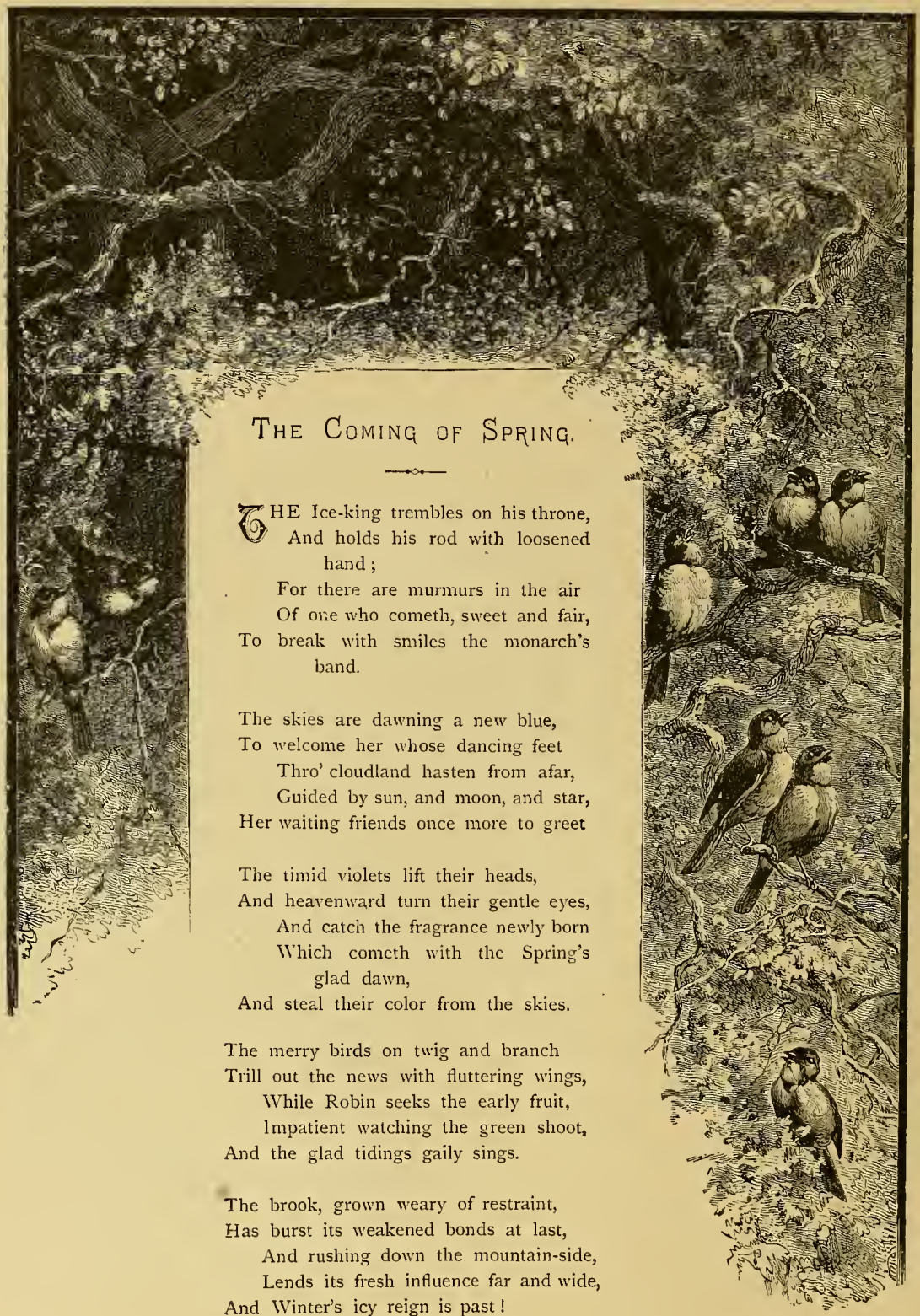
Of this and that ere long we talked,
Till Nora, in a sober fit,
On "Reaping that which we have sown,"
Began to moralize a bit

Then whispered I, "Ah! Nora dear,
Can you not think how long ago,
Within that little heart of yours,
The seeds of *love* I tried to sow?

3.

"How rich a harvest that dear heart
Will yield to me, I cannot say,
But if there's aught awaits me there,
I am a happy man to-day!"
And then, amid the golden sheaves,
Ere yet the twilight did begin,
I opened wide my longing arms,
And gathered *my* sweet harvest in.

W. HATHERELL.



The Coming of Spring.

THE Ice-king trembles on his throne,
And holds his rod with loosened hand;
For there are murmurs in the air
Of one who cometh, sweet and fair,
To break with smiles the monarch's band.

The skies are dawning a new blue,
To welcome her whose dancing feet
Thro' cloudland hasten from afar,
Guided by sun, and moon, and star,
Her waiting friends once more to greet

The timid violets lift their heads,
And heavenward turn their gentle eyes,
And catch the fragrance newly born
Which cometh with the Spring's glad dawn,
And steal their color from the skies.

The merry birds on twig and branch
Trill out the news with fluttering wings,
While Robin seeks the early fruit,
Impatient watching the green shoot,
And the glad tidings gaily sings.

The brook, grown weary of restraint,
Has burst its weakened bonds at last,
And rushing down the mountain-side,
Lends its fresh influence far and wide,
And Winter's icy reign is past!

A Recipe for Summer.

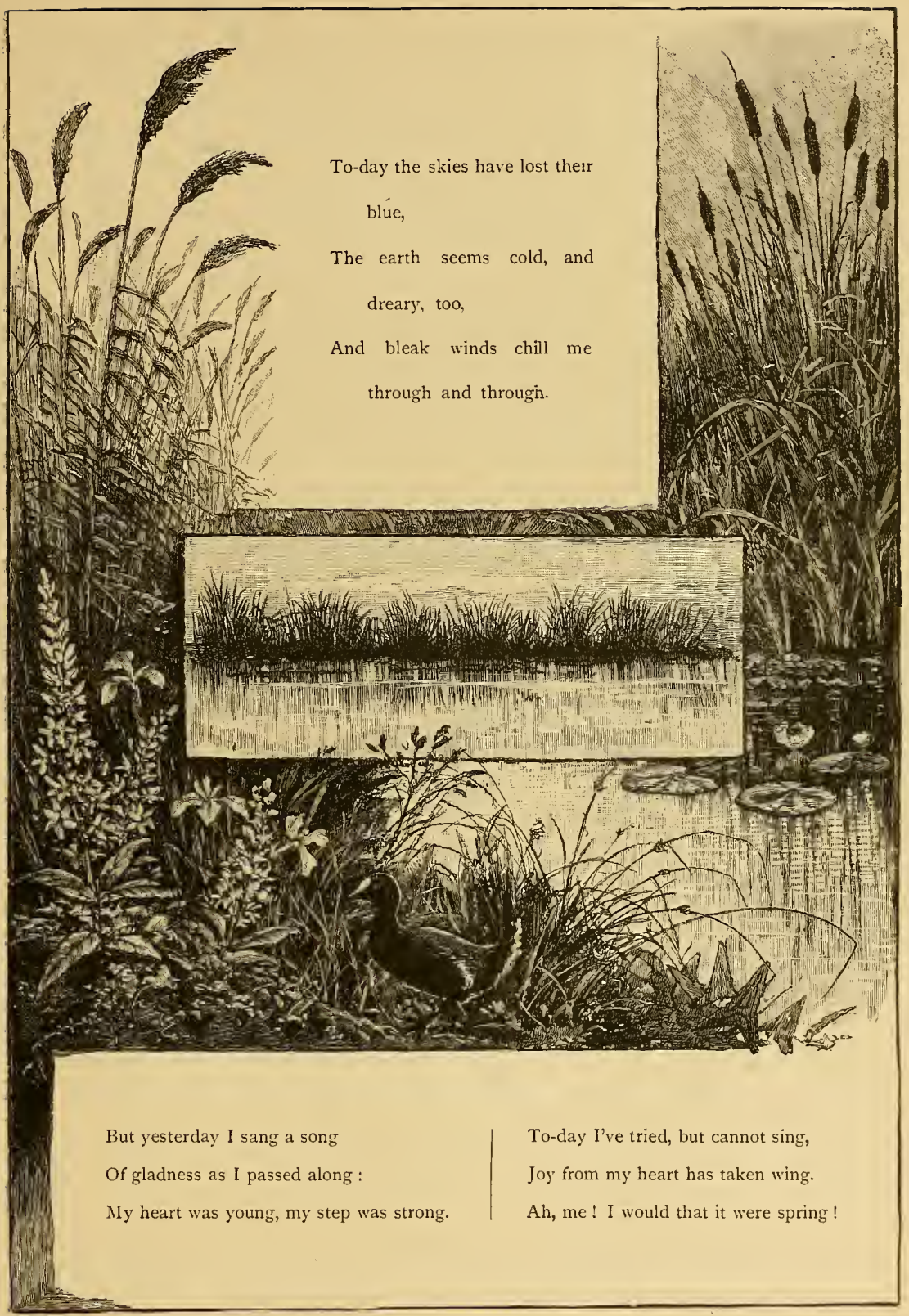
WHAT is summer made of?
Of opening buds and flowers;
Of sunshine and of shadow,
And gracious little showers.
Of birds that in the tree-tops
Sing sweetly all the day;
Of buttercups and daisies,
And breath of new-
mown hay.

Of butterflies that hover
O'er every fragrant rose;
Of bees that gather honey
Where the honeysuckle grows.
Of brooks that murmur softly,
And thro' the meadows glide;
Of shadows shifting gently
Adown the mountain-side.

Of rainbows after showers,
Of starlight nights so still;
Of moonbeams shimmering softly
O'er every brook and rill.
Of mornings dawning sweetly
O'er dew-wet grass and flowers;
Oh! summer time is only
A life of golden hours!

YESTERDAY—TO-DAY.

BUT yesterday, it seems to me,
The skies were blue, and fair to see,
And birds sang sweet on every tree.



To-day the skies have lost their blue,
The earth seems cold, and dreary, too,
And bleak winds chill me through and through.

But yesterday I sang a song
Of gladness as I passed along:
My heart was young, my step was strong.

To-day I've tried, but cannot sing,
Joy from my heart has taken wing.
Ah, me! I would that it were spring!

Old King Winter's Song.

OH, I am the friend of the girls and boys!
I am the friend they love
When there's plenty of frost on the earth below,
And plenty of sunshine above!
To me they look for the frozen pond,
All ready for skate and slide;
To me they turn with their painted sleds
For a coasting hill so wide.

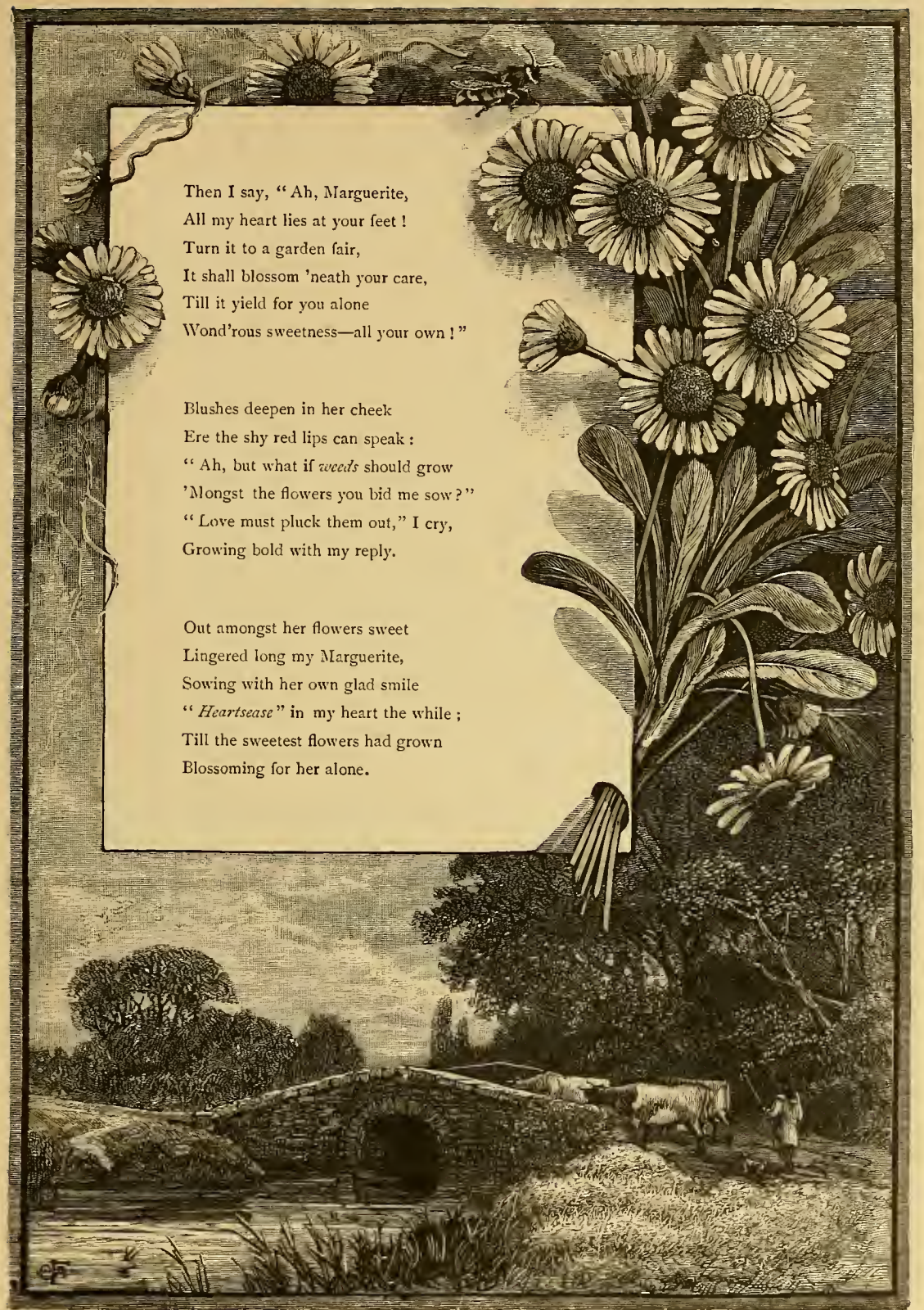
There is snow for the sleigh-rides far and near,
When the bells are ringing a chime
Of the merriest music in all the world,
As a tribute to winter time.
If I kiss the cheeks of the lasses, so
That they tingle awhile, what then?
I must have *my* share of the fun before
The summer shall come again.

I deck the trees with a fringe so bright
That they glisten in sun or shade;
And I scatter my snowflakes in the air
Till they fill each valley and glade.
And climbing up to the mountain-top,
Each shrub and tree I crown,
And I spread the whitest of covers o'er
The ground so barren and brown.

I'm hoary-headed and old, I know,
But the boys don't care for that;
They're glad to welcome the jolly old king
Who wears the snow-brimmed hat.
For I am the friend of the young and strong,
And a merry old soul am I,
When there's plenty of frost on the ground below,
And over it all blue sky.

MARGUERITE.

OUT amongst her flowers sweet,
Lingers pretty Marguerite;
Sowing with her hands so white
Future blossoms fair and bright.
And the sunbeams lovingly
Kiss sweet Marguerite—for me.



Then I say, "Ah, Marguerite,
All my heart lies at your feet!
Turn it to a garden fair,
It shall blossom 'neath your care,
Till it yield for you alone
Wond'rous sweetness—all your own!"

Blushes deepen in her cheek
Ere the shy red lips can speak:
"Ah, but what if *weeds* should grow
'Mongst the flowers you bid me sow?"
"Love must pluck them out," I cry,
Growing bold with my reply.

Out amongst her flowers sweet
Lingered long my Marguerite,
Sowing with her own glad smile
"*Heartsease*" in my heart the while;
Till the sweetest flowers had grown
Blossoming for her alone.

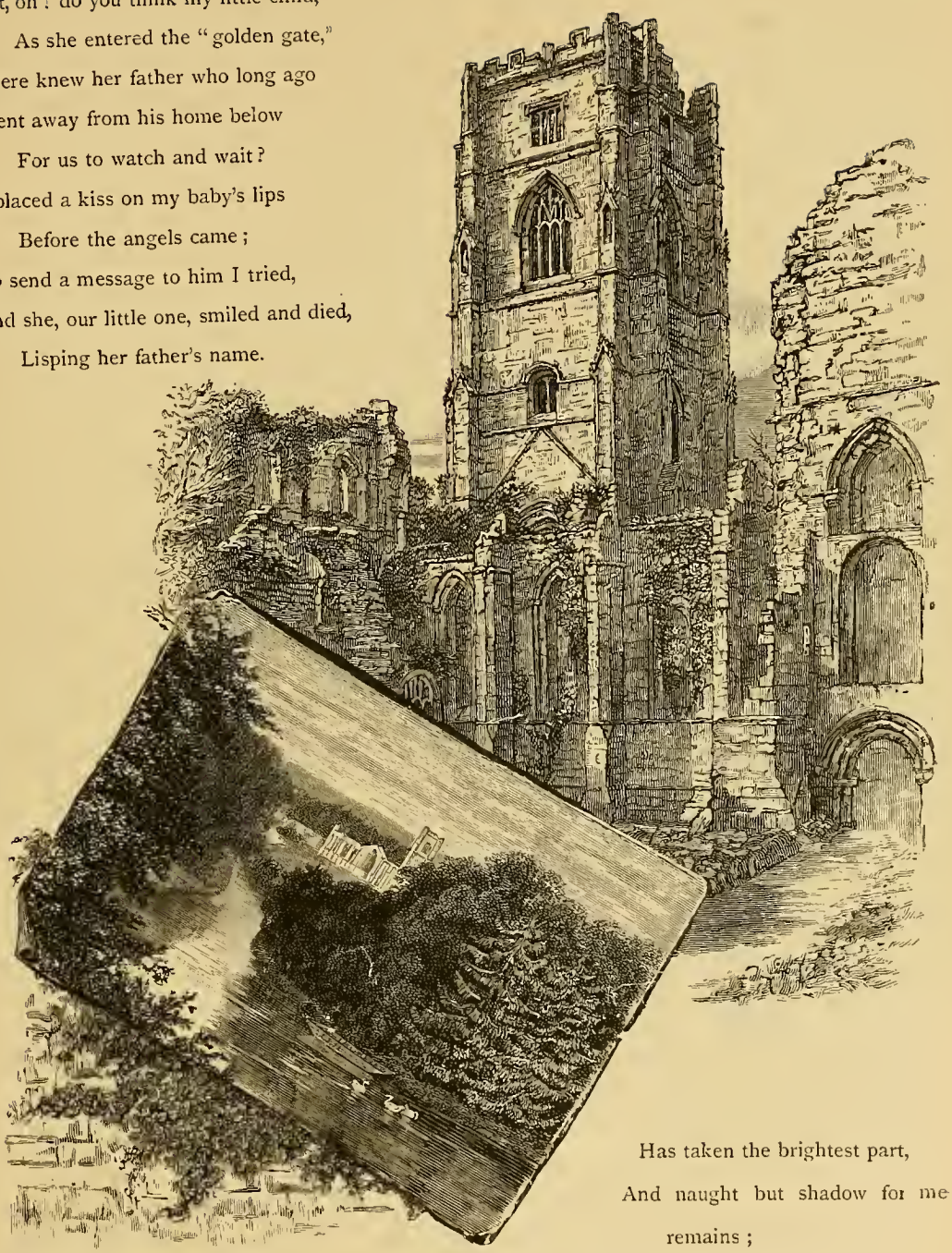
Unrest.

ALL winter long the snow has lain,
Like the wings of a brooding dove,
Over the spot where baby lies;
And they chide the tears in my longing eyes,
And whisper, "She doubts God's love."
Is it because I doubt? Ah, no!
But only a mother's heart
Can measure the depths of a mother's grief,
Or welcome the tears that bring relief,
Tho' they may not *heal* the smart.

They point above, and talk to me
Of the beautiful city there,
Where many a freed soul finds its rest
Nestling close on the Saviour's breast,
For ever free from care.
But there are so many within His arms!
And *mine are so empty now!*
My baby is wearing a crown, I know,
But she wore the crown of *my love* below,
With my kisses on her brow.

Now in the garden the blossoms smile
And whisper of peace to me,
But I long—I long for one sweet flower,
Which grew in the warmth of my love each hour
With beauty rare to see.
Violets under the snow are hid,
Ready, when winter goes,
To bloom and smile 'neath summer skies
Over the spot where baby lies,
So still in her deep repose.

But, oh ! do you think my little child,
As she entered the "golden gate,"
There knew her father who long ago
Went away from his home below
For us to watch and wait?
I placed a kiss on my baby's lips
Before the angels came;
To send a message to him I tried,
And she, our little one, smiled and died,
Lisping her father's name.



And I—I sit with my empty arms,
And empty, desolate heart:
I may have needed the chastening rod,
For life was too bright a thing; but God
Has taken the brightest part,
And naught but shadow for me
remains;
And yet—and yet, I know
That *both* my treasures, so far above,
Will plead with Him, in His wondrous love,
To light my path below.

A Summer Afternoon.

A DAISIED meadow lying fair under a summer sky ;
Sweet ferns and grasses bowing low to the zephyrs hurrying by ;
Over the woodland hangs the mist of the recent summer shower,
And the bees and butterflies idly flit through every wayside flower.

Over the quiet fields I come, watching with dreamful eyes
The clouds that fleecily, lightly sail over the tender skies,
Watching the swallows stretch their wings in the wonderful space above,
And my *heart* soars up with a thankful prayer for the Father's beautiful love.

The robin sits on the maple bough, singing his mate a song,
While little by little the day declines, and the shadows are growing long ;
And down the lane the cattle stray, cropping the tender grass,
While, swinging her sun-bonnet in her hand, follows the farmer's lass.

I hear the ring of the scythe and hone in the fields not far away,
And the merry hum of the mower's song, as he makes his fragrant hay.
Oh, day so fair from the Maker's hand ! oh, skies so soft and blue !
Can thoughts be other than true and good when born from such as you ?

At the Season of Thanksgiving.

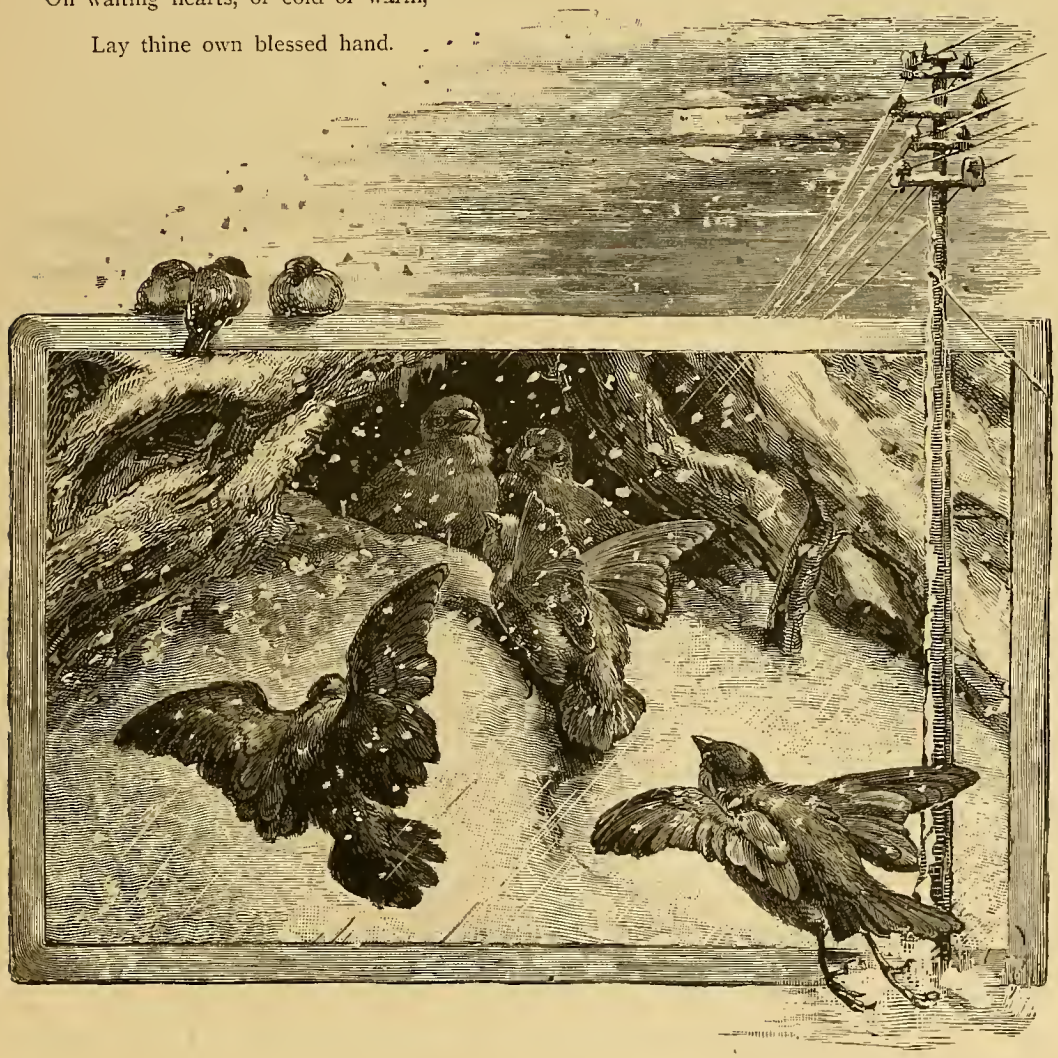
OH! Charity, dear messenger,
From heaven's courts descend,
And to our earth-born hearts the gift
Of thy sweet influence lend.
Touch and arouse the slumbering eyes
Which do not wake to see
How other eyes grow dim with tears,
And hearts droop wearily.

Remind us, whom a Father's grace
Hath blessed with many a gift,
That there are those whom we may help
From sorrow's gloom to lift.
Quicken our sympathy, our love;
Our mercies let us share;

Let the glad sunshine of our lives
Spread o'er sad lives of care.

Sweet Charity, we will not close
Our ears to thy soft voice;
For every impulse born of thee
Must make some heart rejoice.
Then come, come quickly, Charity!
And all throughout our land
On waiting hearts, or cold or warm,
Lay thine own blessed hand.

And may the Lord, who ever heeds
And marks the sparrow's fall,
Help us to know, *whate'er our deeds*
He sees and marks them all.
By day and night, thro' storm and shine,
Whate'er our lives may be,
God grant these gifts of His delight—
Faith, Hope, and *Charity!*



The Old Foot-path.

OH, dear old footpath! day by day
You lie 'neath skies or blue or grey;
Across the meadow 'neath the hill,
Where shadows come and go at will.
Safe home from distant lands once more,
My busy memory travels o'er
Long years of mingled joy and pain,
And takes me back to youth again.

Just there beneath yon linden tree
My little sweetheart watched for me,
To greet me with her tell-tale face,
Where love had marked its own sweet trace.
I wonder where that dainty maid
Thro' all these years gone by has strayed;
Or did some new swain's eager feet
A pathway make o'er grasses sweet,

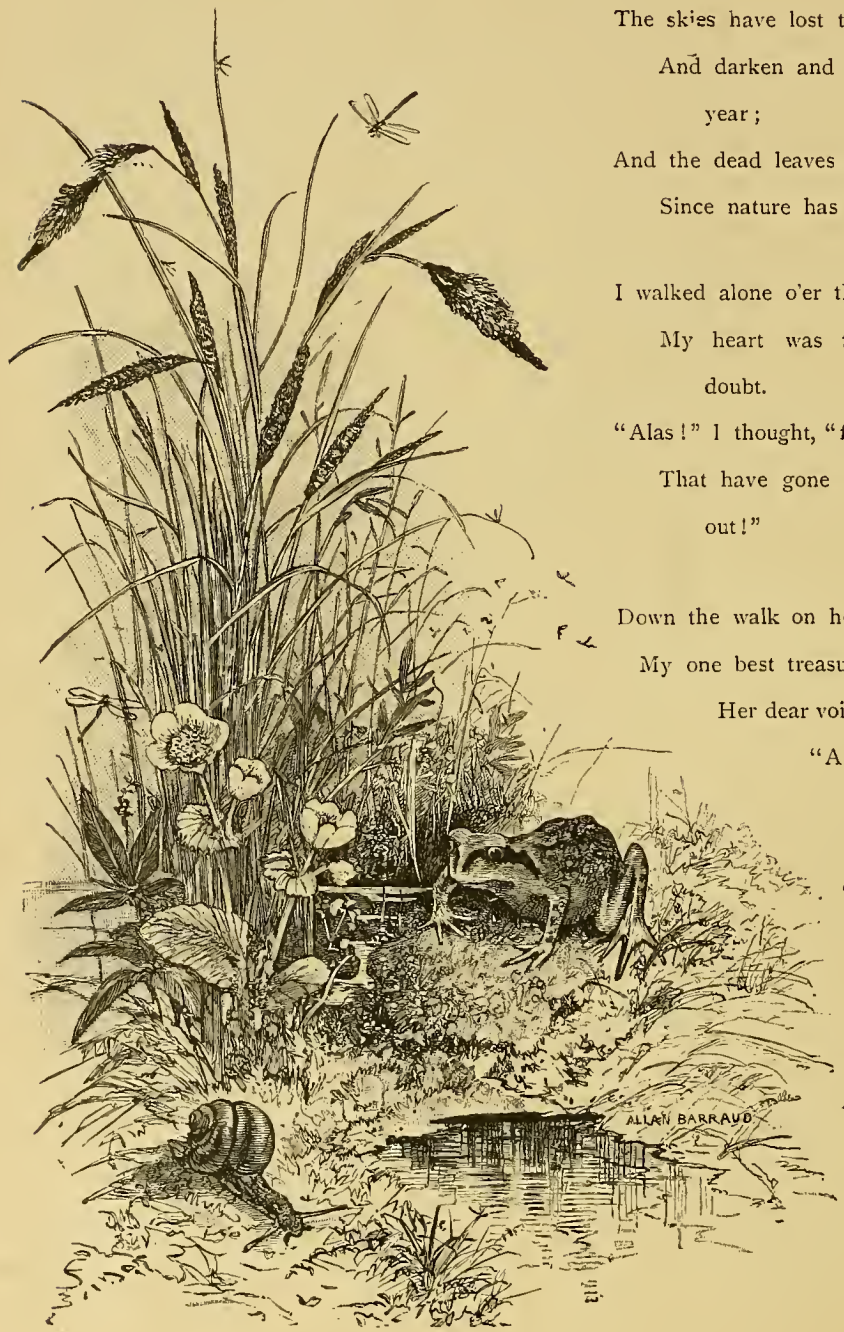
And bend the nodding daisies low,
Whilst two walked slowly to and fro?
And, oh! old path, none ever knew
The lovers' secrets trusted *you*.

Well, Time has many changes rung
Since my young lips its praises sung;
But all unchanged, old friend, are you
To whom my memory still is true.

Your rugged breast is scarred each day
By careless feet which o'er you stray,
And many a hidden foot-print lies
Unnoticed 'neath the changing skies.
Feet that once trod you, now at last
For ever rest—their journey past.
And who may know, old path, if e'er
My feet again shall tread you here?

A Handful of Flowers.

SUMMER is gone, and the autumn winds
Are stripping the leaves from the trembling trees;



The garden is lonely, its treasures are blown
Far, far away on the chilling breeze;

The skies have lost their wonderful blue,
And darken and change with the changing year;
And the dead leaves lie on the roadside brown,
Since nature has grown so sad and drear.

I walked alone o'er the garden path:
My heart was troubled with gloom and doubt.
"Alas!" I thought, "for the many sweet things
That have gone with the beautiful summer out!"

Down the walk on her dancing feet
My one best treasure came merrily.
Her dear voice rang thro' the frosty air:
"A handful of flowers! See, mother, see!

"They were all I could find that the cold had spared,
But they waited to cheer us a little while!
And I guess, mamma, that the summer meant
To say good-bye with just one last smile!"

I gathered my darling within my arms,
The blue of summer was in her eyes,
And the pure, sweet heart I knew was full
Of the beautiful sunshine of summer skies.

Ah! autumn might come with frost and gloom,
And shadows might come and go at will,
But the Lord of heaven and earth was good
To spare my heart's garden one flower still!

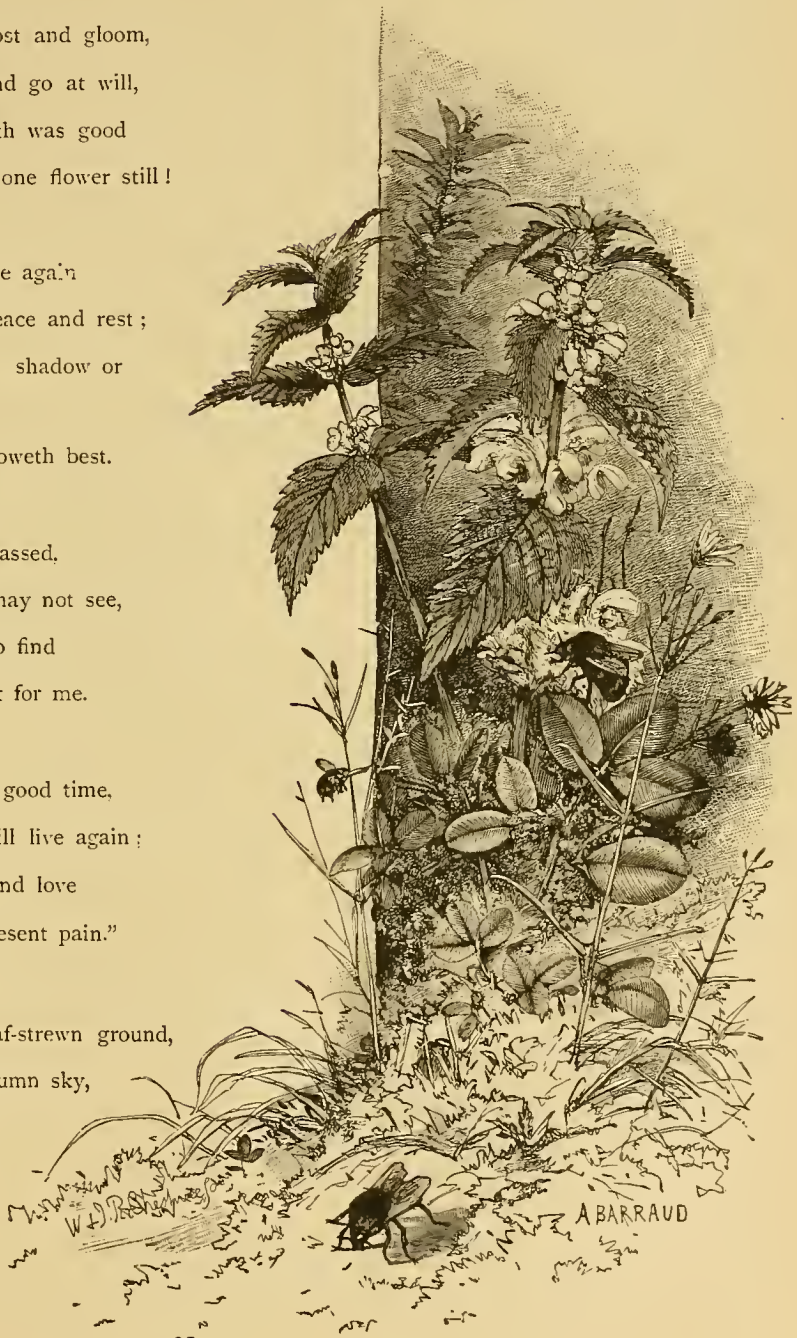
The joys He had taken would live again
In His own fair garden of peace and rest;
And I said in my heart, "Come shadow or shine,
The dear Lord doeth and knoweth best.

"Tho' over my life a cloud has passed,
And the glory of summer I may not see,
If I *search* my heart I am sure to find
A 'handful of flowers' yet left for me.

"And winter will pass in its own good time,
And the verdure now dead will live again;
And peace, and trust, and faith, and love
Shall all be born from my present pain."

So I lifted mine eyes from the leaf-strewn ground,
And looked far off at the autumn sky,
And I knew that the shadows that dimmed its blue
Would vanish and fade in the "by-and-by."

Oh! hearts that weep, and are prone to yield
To the touch of gloom in this world of ours,
Go search yourselves, and you'll always find
That there still remains a "handful of flowers."



The Ship at Sea.

WHEN my ship comes home from sea,
The ship that went so far from me,
"Then this and that we'll do," I say,
And lay my plans for that glad day.
Ah, me! the ships that sail about
From port to port; now in, now out!
Is there a heart that hath *no* share
In all the precious freight they bear?
God grant that wheresoe'er they be,
No harm befal our "Ship at Sea."

Grandmother's Thoughts.

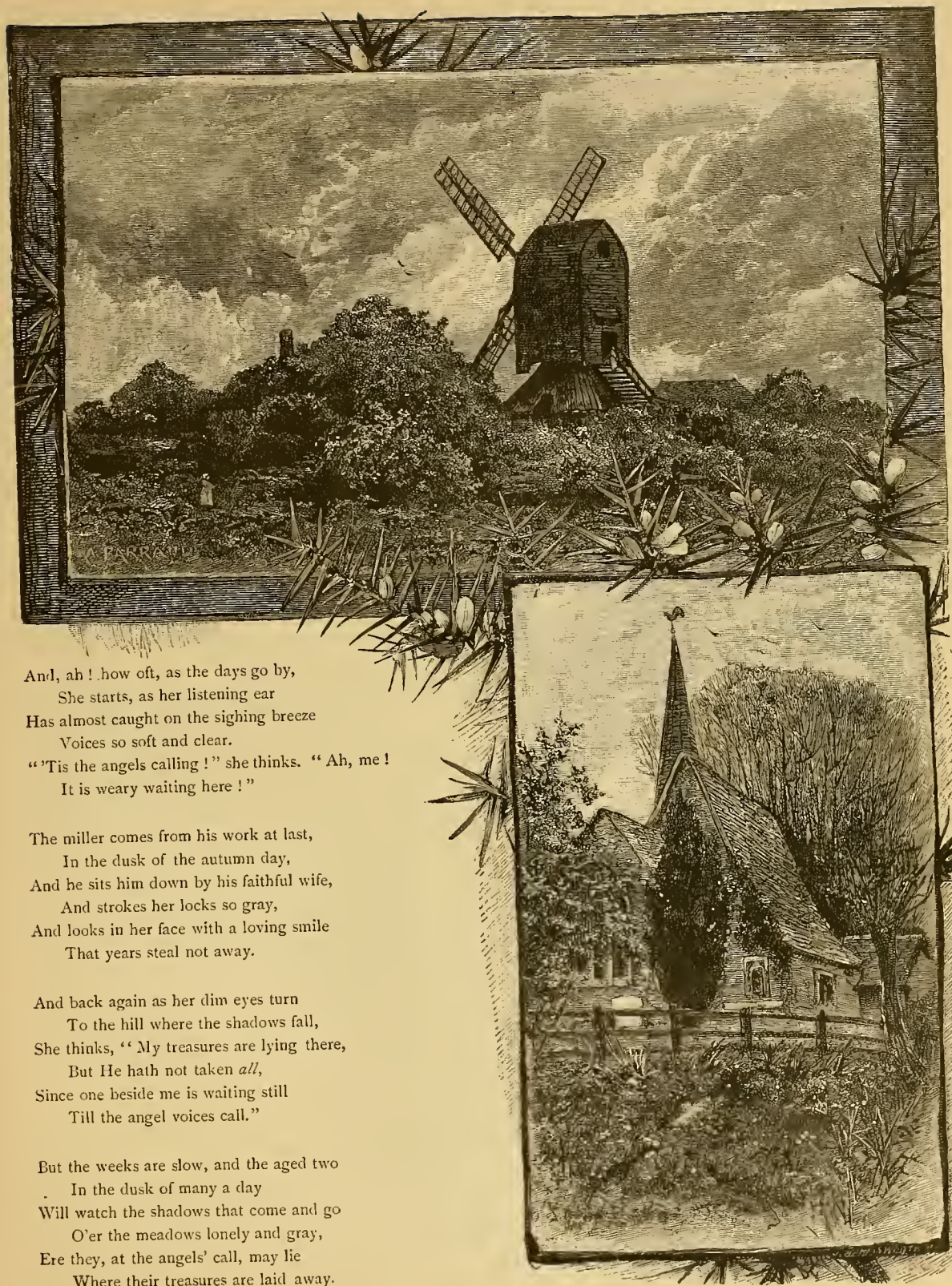
WHAT happy thoughts are flitting
(While Grandmamma sits knitting)
Throughout the aged heart still true and strong?
Ah! 'tis just the same old story,
She is giving Christ the glory
For the mercies which have blessed her life so long.

"For like stitches on my needles," says this happy Grandma Gray,
"So He multiplies my blessings and increases them each day."

Called by the Angels.

THE miller's wife is sitting alone
In the dusk of the autumn day,
While over the hill the shadows fall,
And over the meadows gray;
And the cares of many a busy hour
Have slipped from her heart away.

Her eyes have wandered thro' mist of tears
To the churchyard under the hill,
Where the soft gray tint of the twilight lies,
And all is so calm and still;
And where her treasures—so long ago—
She laid at the Master's will.

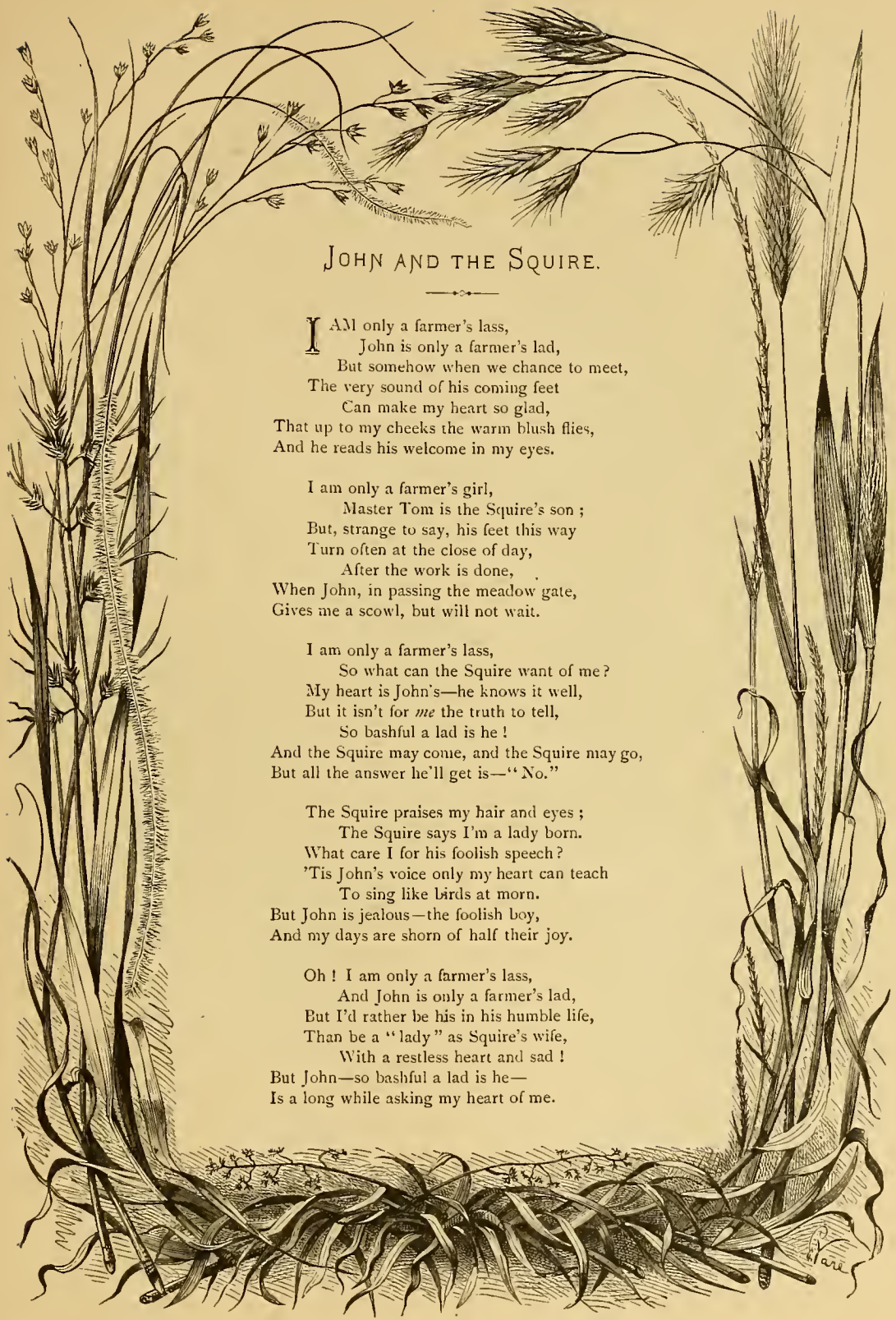


And, ah! how oft, as the days go by,
She starts, as her listening ear
Has almost caught on the sighing breeze
Voices so soft and clear.
"'Tis the angels calling!" she thinks. "Ah, me!
It is weary waiting here!"

The miller comes from his work at last,
In the dusk of the autumn day,
And he sits him down by his faithful wife,
And strokes her locks so gray,
And looks in her face with a loving smile
That years steal not away.

And back again as her dim eyes turn
To the hill where the shadows fall,
She thinks, "My treasures are lying there,
But He hath not taken *all*,
Since one beside me is waiting still
Till the angel voices call."

But the weeks are slow, and the aged two
In the dusk of many a day
Will watch the shadows that come and go
O'er the meadows lonely and gray,
Ere they, at the angels' call, may lie
Where their treasures are laid away.



John and the Squire.

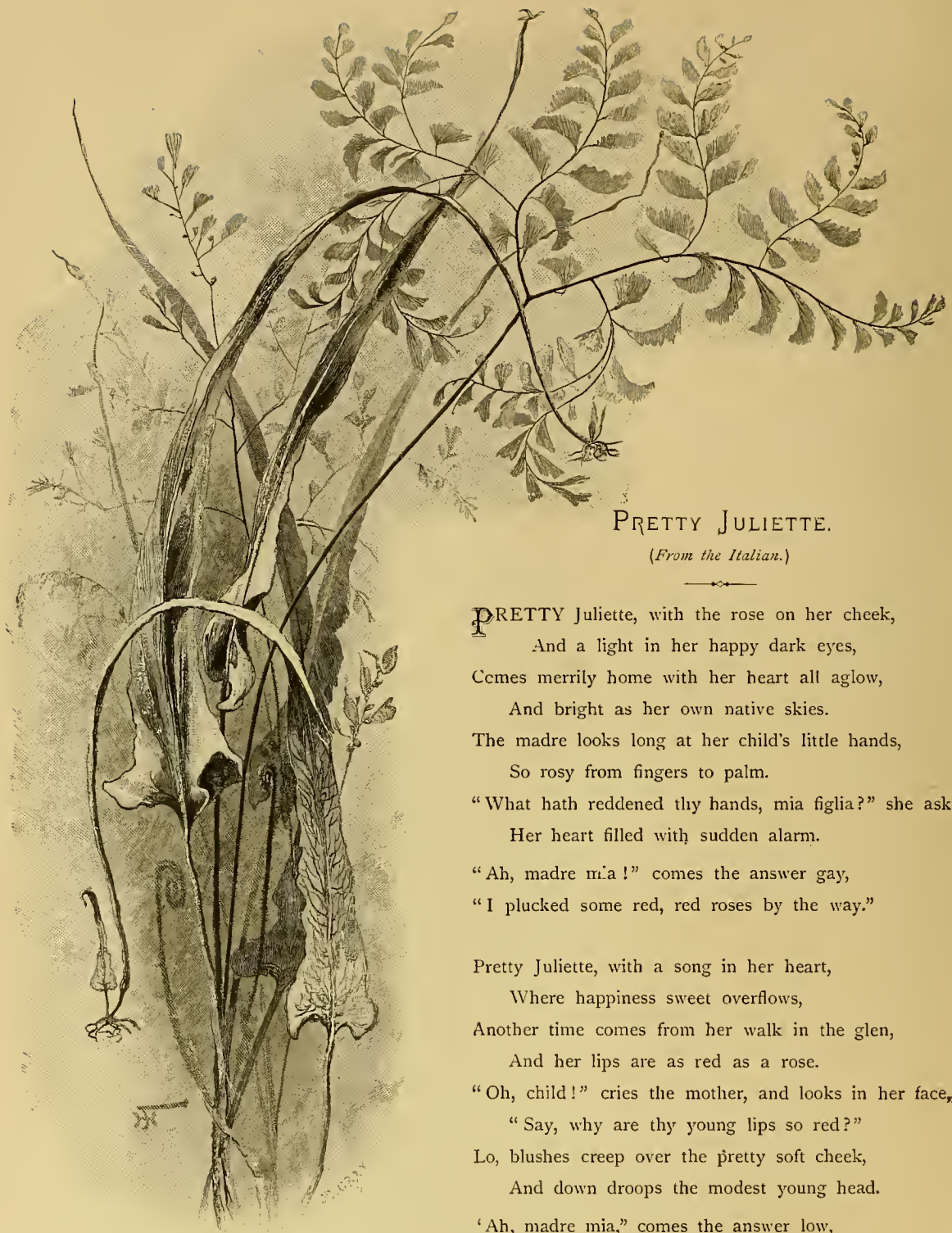
I AM only a farmer's lass,
John is only a farmer's lad,
But somehow when we chance to meet,
The very sound of his coming feet
Can make my heart so glad,
That up to my cheeks the warm blush flies,
And he reads his welcome in my eyes.

I am only a farmer's girl,
Master Tom is the Squire's son;
But, strange to say, his feet this way
Turn often at the close of day,
After the work is done,
When John, in passing the meadow gate,
Gives me a scowl, but will not wait.

I am only a farmer's lass,
So what can the Squire want of me?
My heart is John's—he knows it well,
But it isn't for *me* the truth to tell,
So bashful a lad is he!
And the Squire may come, and the Squire may go,
But all the answer he'll get is—"No."

The Squire praises my hair and eyes;
The Squire says I'm a lady born.
What care I for his foolish speech?
'Tis John's voice only my heart can teach
To sing like birds at morn.
But John is jealous—the foolish boy,
And my days are shorn of half their joy.

Oh! I am only a farmer's lass,
And John is only a farmer's lad,
But I'd rather be his in his humble life,
Than be a "lady" as Squire's wife,
With a restless heart and sad!
But John—so bashful a lad is he—
Is a long while asking my heart of me.



Pretty Juliette.

(From the Italian.)

PRETTY Juliette, with the rose on her cheek,
And a light in her happy dark eyes,
Comes merrily home with her heart all aglow,
And bright as her own native skies.
The madre looks long at her child's little hands,
So rosy from fingers to palm.
"What hath reddened thy hands, mia figlia?" she asks,
Her heart filled with sudden alarm.

"Ah, madre mia!" comes the answer gay,
"I plucked some red, red roses by the way."

Pretty Juliette, with a song in her heart,
Where happiness sweet overflows,
Another time comes from her walk in the glen,
And her lips are as red as a rose.
"Oh, child!" cries the mother, and looks in her face,
"Say, why are thy young lips so red?"
Lo, blushes creep over the pretty soft cheek,
And down droops the modest young head.

'Ah, madre mia," comes the answer low,
"It was the red, red berries stained them so."

Another time homeward comes pretty Juliette;
But her heart has forgotten its song,
And her cheek and her lips are as pale as the snow,
And her feet on the way linger long.
The mother looks close at the white, weary face.
"Carissima figlia!" she cries.
"What hath chased from thy cheek the sweet blush of the rose?
What hath darkened the light in thine eyes?

"Ah, madre! madre mia!" is the cry,
"Hold me upon thine heart and let me die!
For when my hands were red, *his* pressed them so;
It was *his* kiss which stained my lips; his low,
Persuasive voice filled all my heart with song,
And made mine eyes to shine, and my step strong.
But love is false! ah, madre, love lies dead!
Can roses bloom when summer's sun hath fled?"

SAVED!

FOUND, far out on the snow-mapped moor,
The child that had gone astray!
Found, by a friend who was strong to save,
And snatch from death away
The little lost lamb of a mother's flock,
So far from the sweet home fold,
And safely borne to a mother's breast,
For a mother's arms to hold.

I take the story to heart, dear Lord,
For a wandering sheep am I;
Far, far astray from the one true fold,
And out 'neath a wintry sky.
There find me, oh, Thou mighty friend,
And bear me in Thine arms
To the haven of heaven, where never heart
Can tremble with earth's alarms.

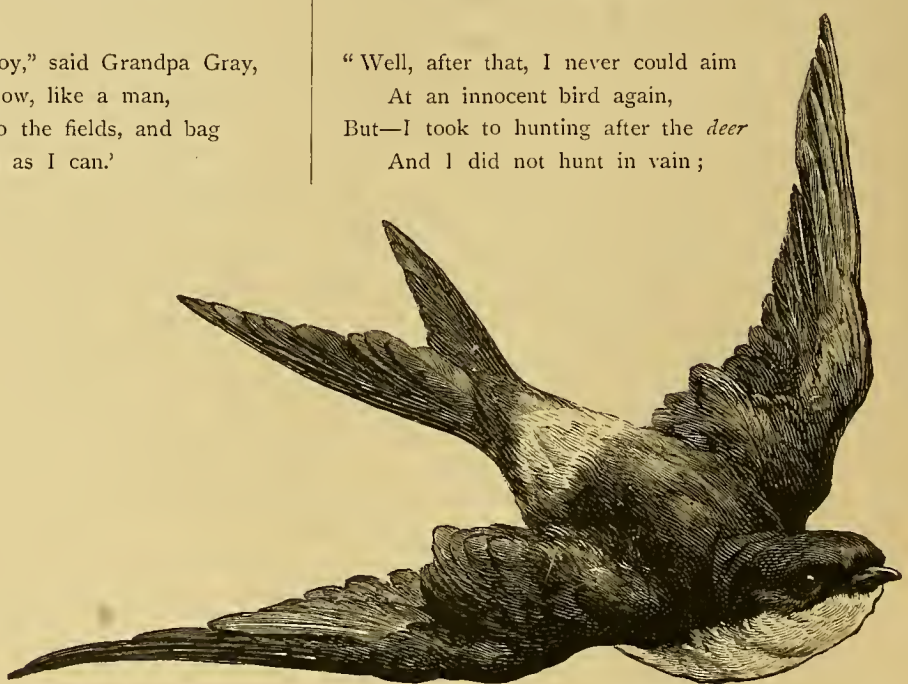
Grandpa and his "Dear."

CAN any one say what fun there is
In the thoughtless use of a gun,
Which takes its aim at an innocent life,
And, lo! that life is done?
The merry, happy, warbling birds,
Tho' roguish they may be,
The song they sing is pleasanter far
Than the bang of a gun—to me.

"When I was a boy," said Grandpa Gray,
"I thought, 'Now, like a man,
I'll take my gun to the fields, and bag
As many birds as I can.'

"So off I went, and I banged away,
With no thought of the pain I gave,
Till I presently met a sweet young miss
Trying one bird to save.
It had fallen near with a wounded wing,
And the look in her face so sad
Went straight to my heart, and I felt ashamed
Of myself for a heartless lad.

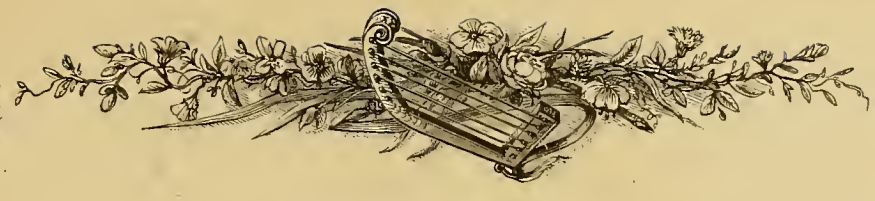
"Well, after that, I never could aim
At an innocent bird again,
But—I took to hunting after the *deer*
And I did not hunt in vain;



For I've captured one, and
I've never ceased
To love and cherish my
'Dear;'
And if you want to see
her, boys,
Why, look at your *grand-*
mother here."
K. STREET

"For Jesus' Sake, Amen!"

DEAR Lord, Thy blessing, ere I lay
Me down to take my rest, I pray!
Forgive the errors of this day,
And be Thou near;
That thro' the long, dark hours of night
No trouble may my heart affright,
And e'en when dawns the morning's light
Be with me here.
I need thee now—I'll need thee then;
Keep me, for Jesus' sake—Amen!



The New Lesson.

So you're learning a lesson, maiden fair,
Tho' a schoolgirl never more :
Learning a lesson with all your heart
That you never have learned before.
The sunbeams herald the gladsome day,
And over the world they dance and play,
While you are conning with heart so gay
Your sweet new "lesson" o'er.

You are "somebody's queen ; fair, gracious, sweet!"
You *know*—for that letter at rest,
Safe hidden from curious eyes, my dear,
'Neath the folds on your gentle breast,
Has over and over in every line
Told you that story—oh! maiden mine--
And the reading has filled your eyes with the shine
Of your own love half confessed.

Many a lesson you've learned, dear child,
In the schoolgirl days gone by ;
And some were easy, and some were hard,
Bringing a frown and sigh.
But, oh, to be learning a lesson like this!
When studying it brings such a measure of bliss!
And the learning—is helped by a lover's kiss :
It is pleasure that never can die.

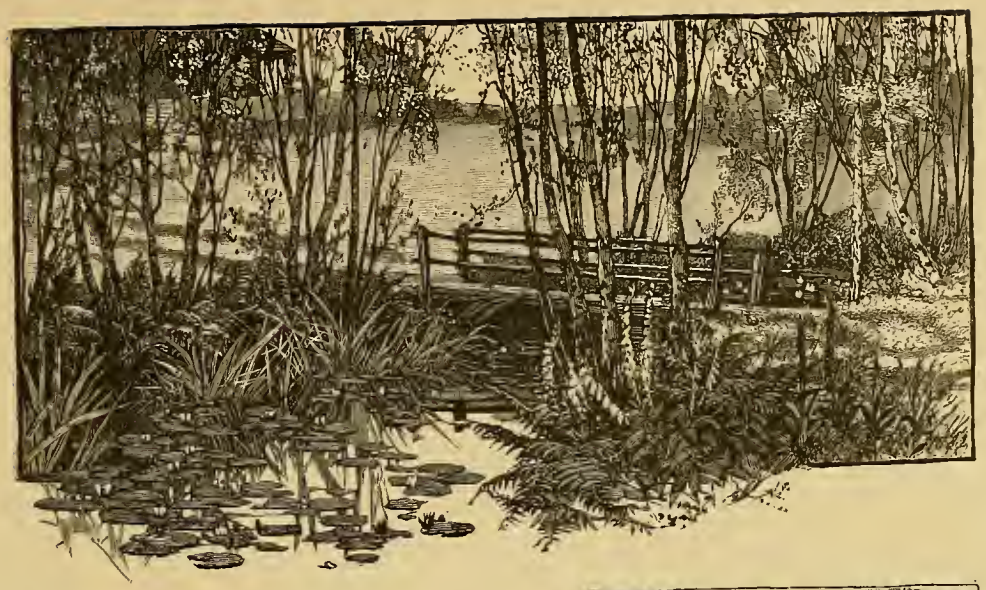
As the morning heralds the full, bright day,
You stand with your hopes and fears
On the very threshold of womanhood,
Crowned with your nineteen years ;
Which have gathered you laurels, one by one,
Till the days of your childish plans are done,
And the work of your womanhood scarce begun,
Either for smiles or tears.

So keep your secret, 'tis all your own,
But the smile that dimples your cheek,
And the happy light in your eyes, betray
What your lips refuse to speak.
And the sun shall gleam, and glimmer, and play
Over the waters, and far away,
And then—at the close of a happy day
Some one his answer will seek.

The Brook's Last Song.

THE brook goes gently murmuring
On its accustomed way,
Thro' meadow grasses singing,
Thro' forests old and gray;
But its song seems strangely dreary
On this October day.

"Oh! fragrant grasses bending
To kiss me as I go,
Well may my heart be dreary,
Well may my song be low,
And each succeeding ripple
Be noiseless in its flow.

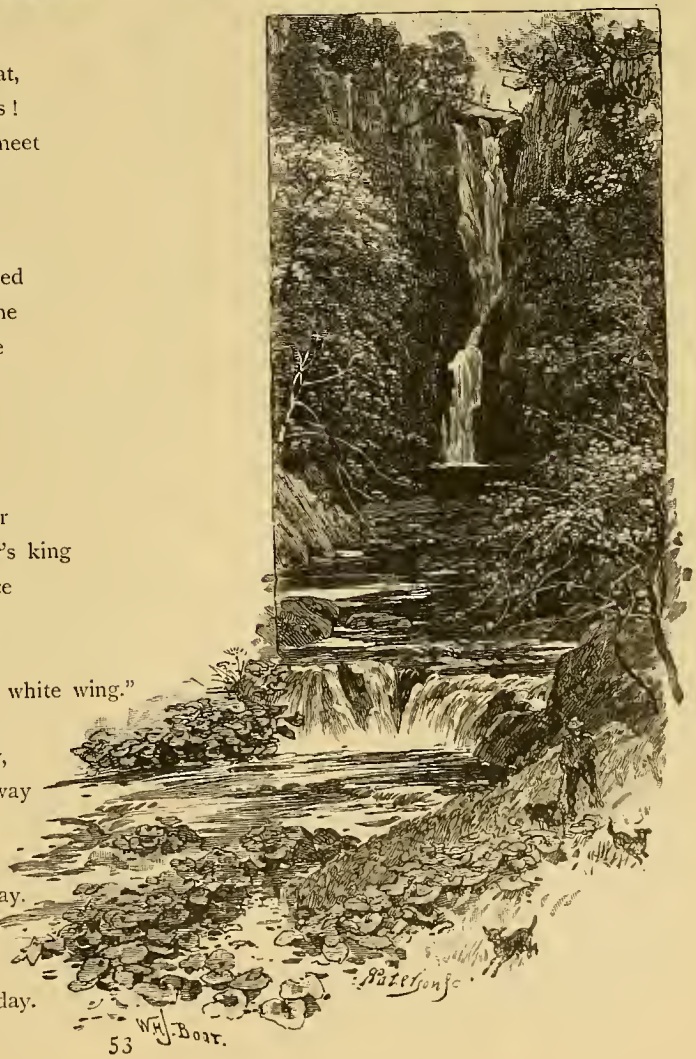


"For day by day my pulses
Must yet more slowly beat,
Till comes a time—oh, daisies!
When never more shall meet
Your fragrant lips my waters
In kisses soft and sweet.

"Oh! lovers who have lingered
Full many a time with me
To talk your foolish nonsense
With lovers' harmony,
But yet a little longer
Your servant I can be!

"For know you not, the hour
Comes near when winter's king
Shall freeze my lips in silence
With icy covering?
And I shall die in sorrow,
Crushed 'neath his cold, white wing."

And slowly, yet more sternly,
The brook goes on its way
Thro' ferns and drooping grasses,
And thro' the forests gray.
And its song is yet more feeble—
More plaintive day by day.



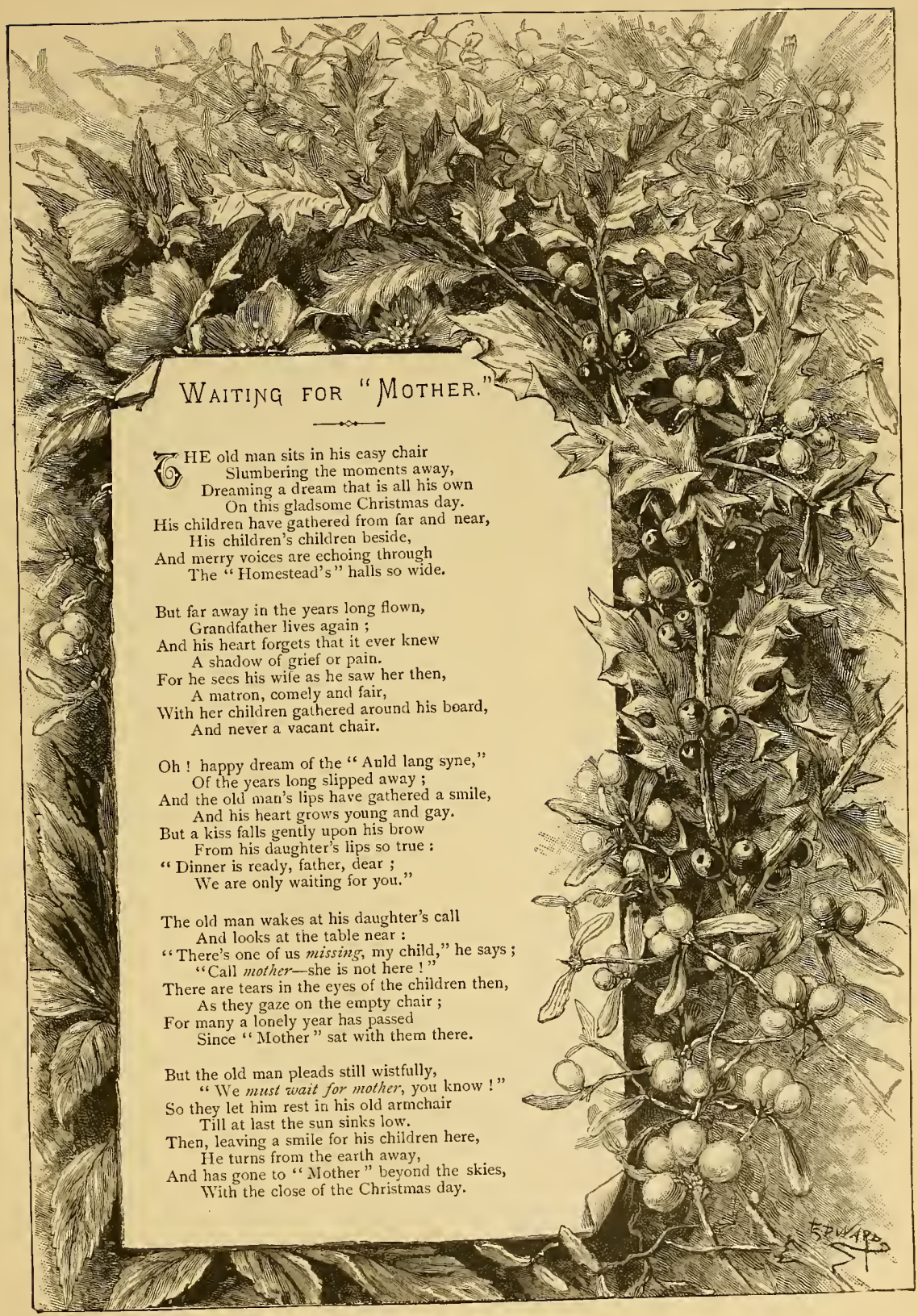
The Three Kitties

ONE was fair as fair could be,
The others black — (*she* thought them pretty);
And I—of only one I dreamed,
And *she*—she was—the other Kitty.
She loved the others, I loved her,
And full of mischief were the three;
But, ah! at last kind fate contrived
To give the winning card to me

With blue eyes closed, and head thrown back,
Within the easy chair sat Kitty.
Thought I, "If now a pair of gloves
I may not win, 'twill be a pity."
And as I softly reached her side,
The red lips parted with a murmur.
And, oh, what joy! she breathed my name!
Within my heart hope grew still firmer.

"Dost love *me*, Kitty?" whispered I;
And soft in sleep came back her answer
I love thee not!" I stood aghast,
Till love urged, "Kiss her while you can, sir."
But, ah! the blue eyes swift unclosed,
And glanced at me with mirth o'erflowing;
Thought I, "I'll let her think awhile
That I've heard something worth the knowing."

Then drawing near, I slily said,
"Fair maid, your dreams have well betrayed you."
"For shame!" cried she, "to steal my thoughts,
And get my slumbering tongue to aid you!"
All penitent, I humbly said,
"But, ah! the secret in my keeping
Has made me sad." Then murmured she,
"One never tells the truth while sleeping!"



Waiting for "Mother."

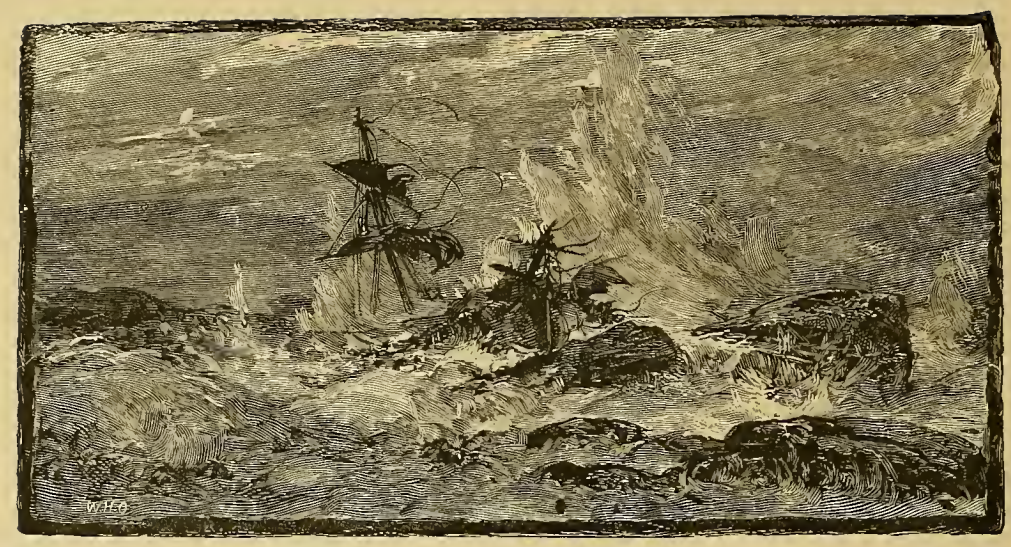
THE old man sits in his easy chair
Slumbering the moments away,
Dreaming a dream that is all his own
On this gladsome Christmas day.
His children have gathered from far and near,
His children's children beside,
And merry voices are echoing through
The "Homestead's" halls so wide.

But far away in the years long flown,
Grandfather lives again;
And his heart forgets that it ever knew
A shadow of grief or pain.
For he sees his wife as he saw her then,
A matron, comely and fair,
With her children gathered around his board,
And never a vacant chair.

Oh! happy dream of the "Auld lang syne,"
Of the years long slipped away;
And the old man's lips have gathered a smile,
And his heart grows young and gay.
But a kiss falls gently upon his brow
From his daughter's lips so true:
"Dinner is ready, father, dear;
We are only waiting for you."

The old man wakes at his daughter's call
And looks at the table near:
"There's one of us *missing*, my child," he says;
"Call *mother*—she is not here!"
There are tears in the eyes of the children then,
As they gaze on the empty chair;
For many a lonely year has passed
Since "Mother" sat with them there.

But the old man pleads still wistfully,
"We *must wait for mother*, you know!"
So they let him rest in his old armchair
Till at last the sun sinks low.
Then, leaving a smile for his children here,
He turns from the earth away,
And has gone to "Mother" beyond the skies,
With the close of the Christmas day.



My Ship—my Captain.

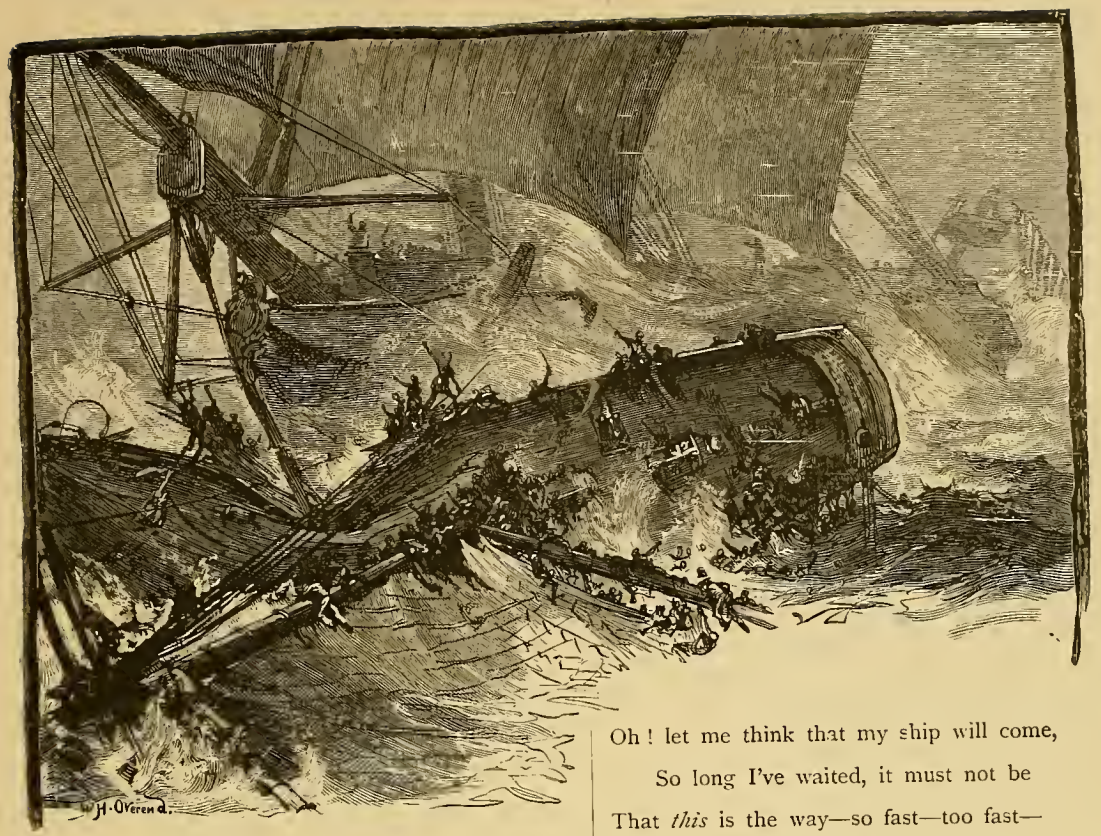
I SAID in the gladness of my heart—
Only a little while ago—
"A ship is hastening home from sea,
And her bonny captain is thinking of me,
And fast the good winds blow!"

So I watched the waves, and I watched the clouds,
Wandering down by the shore each day,
Till I longed for the sea-gulls' wings, that I
Over the billows swift might fly
To meet my love half-way.

Last night they whispered the ship had come—
My ship that was sailing over the sea;
And now in the morning's ruddy glow
They show me a ship that is lying low;
But what is that to me?

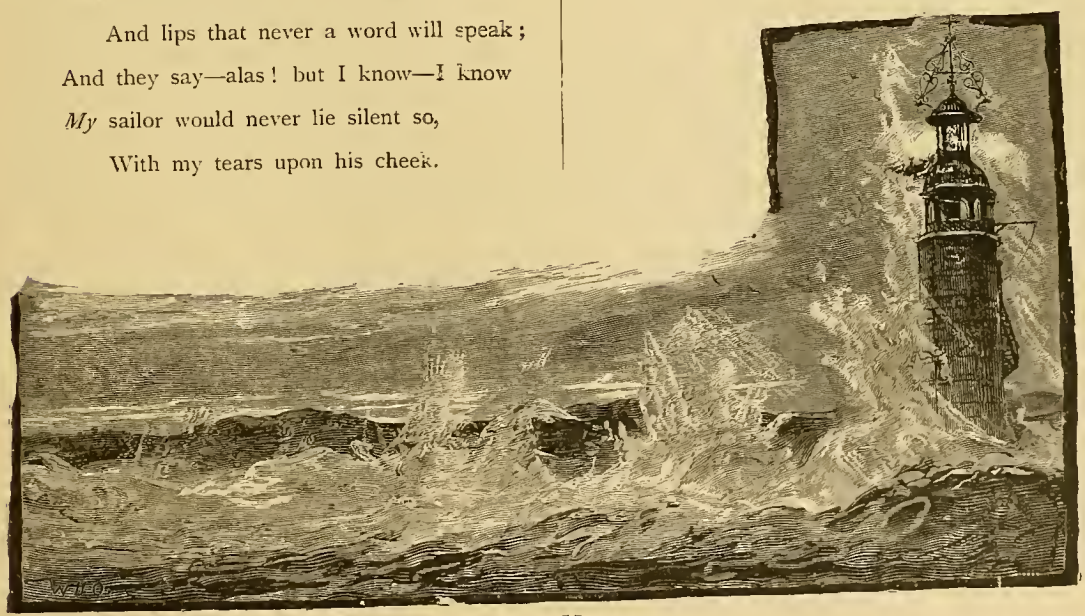
My ship was strong, and her crew were brave.
Her captain—ah!—was *my* captain too,
And he promised to meet me safely here
Some day when the sea and sky were clear,
And when was *his* word untrue?

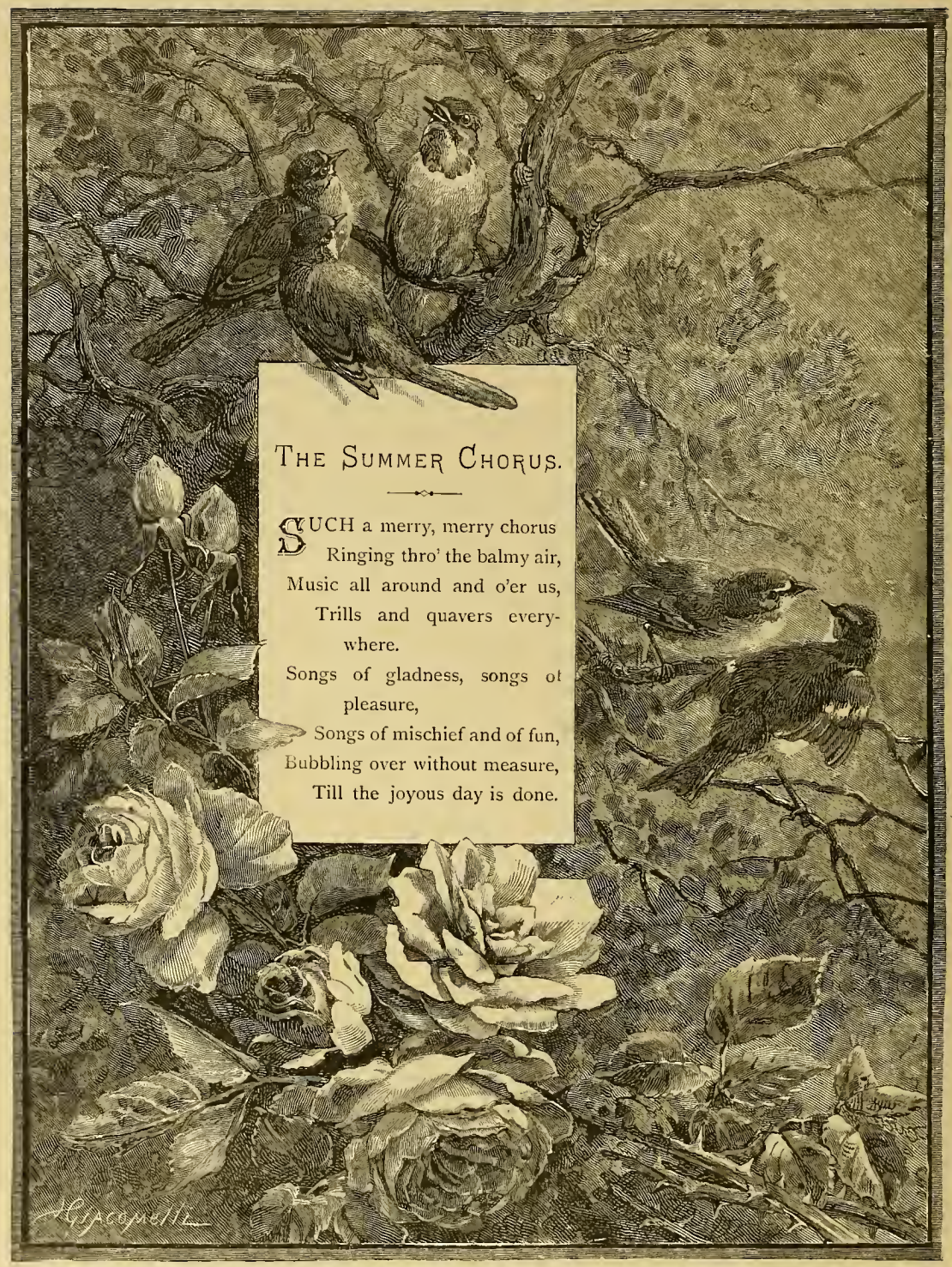
But this?—why, this is a battered thing,
And her crew, they tell me, are lost and dead!
My captain had always a kiss for me
When he came before from over the sea;
But there, 'neath yonder shed,



Lies one with a face so white and still!
And lips that never a word will speak;
And they say—alas! but I know—I know
My sailor would never lie silent so,
With my tears upon his cheek.

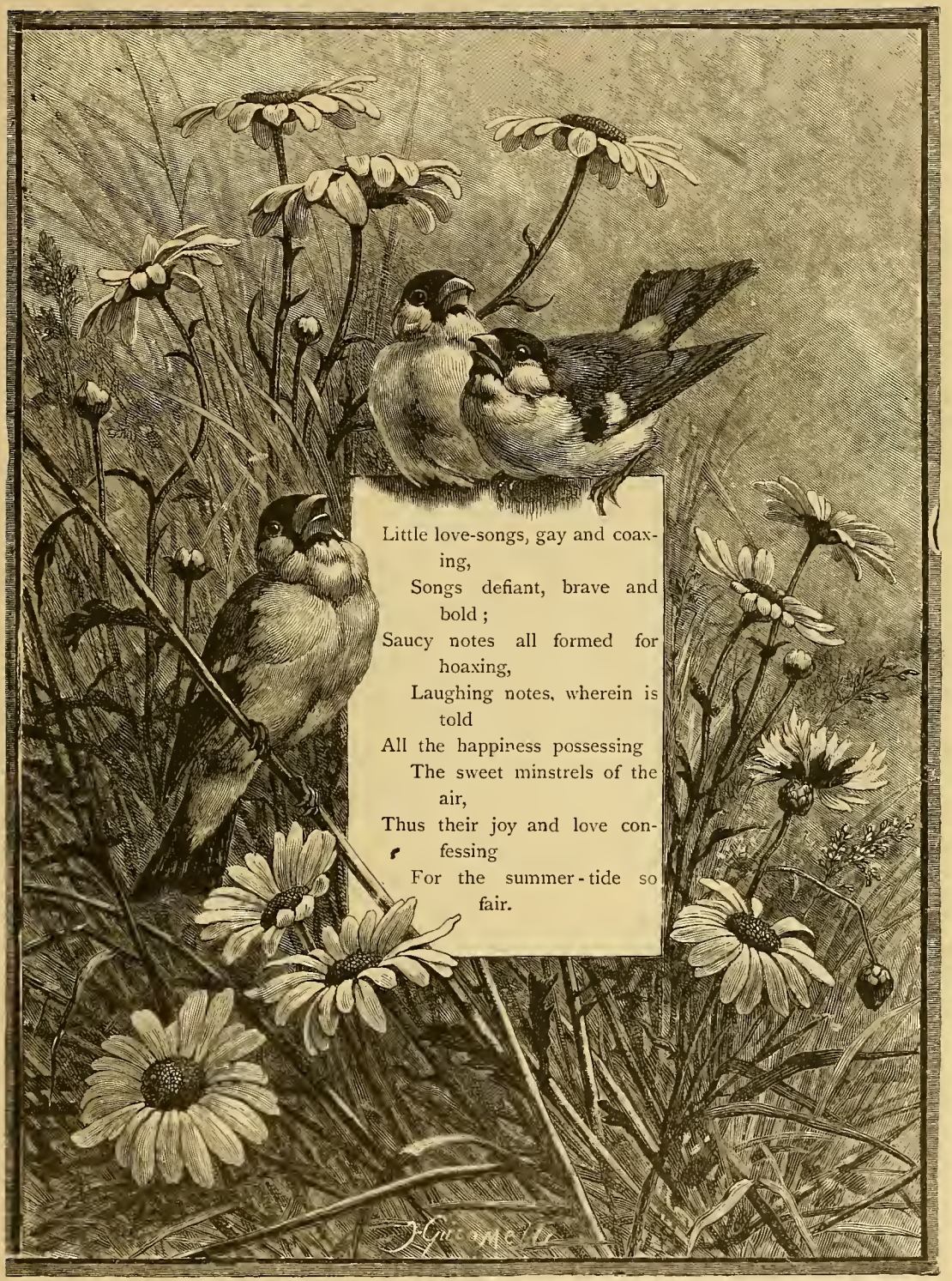
Oh! let me think that my ship will come,
So long I've waited, it must not be
That *this* is the way—so fast—too fast—
My ship, storm-driven, and wrecked at last,
Came over the waves to me!



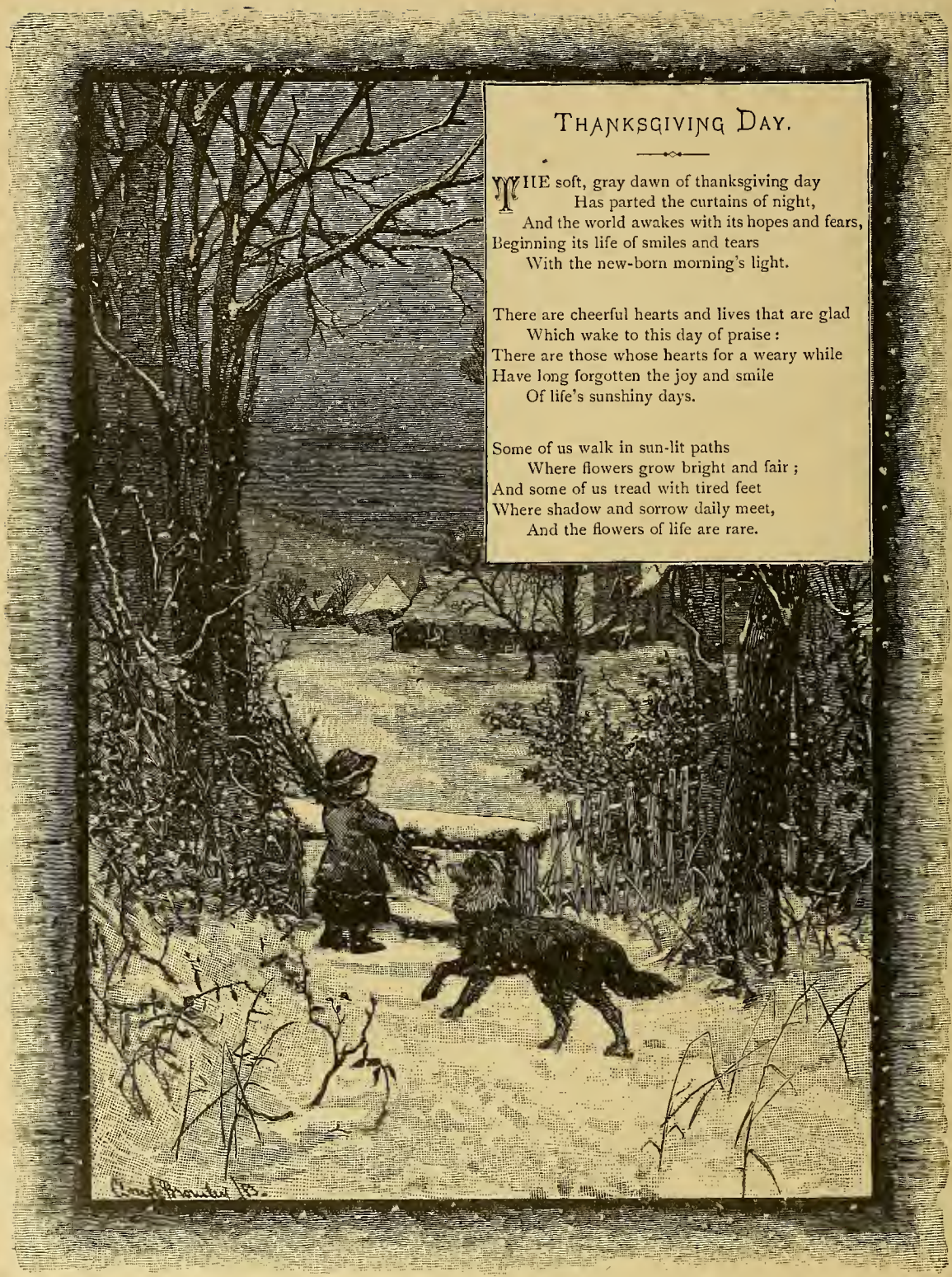


The Summer Chorus.

SUCH a merry, merry chorus
Ringing thro' the balmy air,
Music all around and o'er us,
Trills and quavers everywhere.
Songs of gladness, songs of pleasure,
Songs of mischief and of fun,
Bubbling over without measure,
Till the joyous day is done.



Little love-songs, gay and coaxing,
Songs defiant, brave and bold;
Saucy notes all formed for hoaxing,
Laughing notes, wherein is told
All the happiness possessing
The sweet minstrels of the air,
Thus their joy and love confessing
For the summer-tide so fair.



Thanksgiving Day.

THE soft, gray dawn of thanksgiving day
Has parted the curtains of night,
And the world awakes with its hopes and fears,
Beginning its life of smiles and tears
With the new-born morning's light.

There are cheerful hearts and lives that are glad
Which wake to this day of praise:
There are those whose hearts for a weary while
Have long forgotten the joy and smile
Of life's sunshiny days.

Some of us walk in sun-lit paths
Where flowers grow bright and fair;
And some of us tread with tired feet
Where shadow and sorrow daily meet,
And the flowers of life are rare.

Let those who gather the joys of life
So easily day by day,
Remember the lives that are grieved and sad,
And remembering, strive to make them glad,
And lighten the sombre gray

Which tints the hearts of the lonely poor,
And hides from their eyes the light
That God hath given to shine for all,
As over the world the sunbeams fall
To scatter the shades of night.

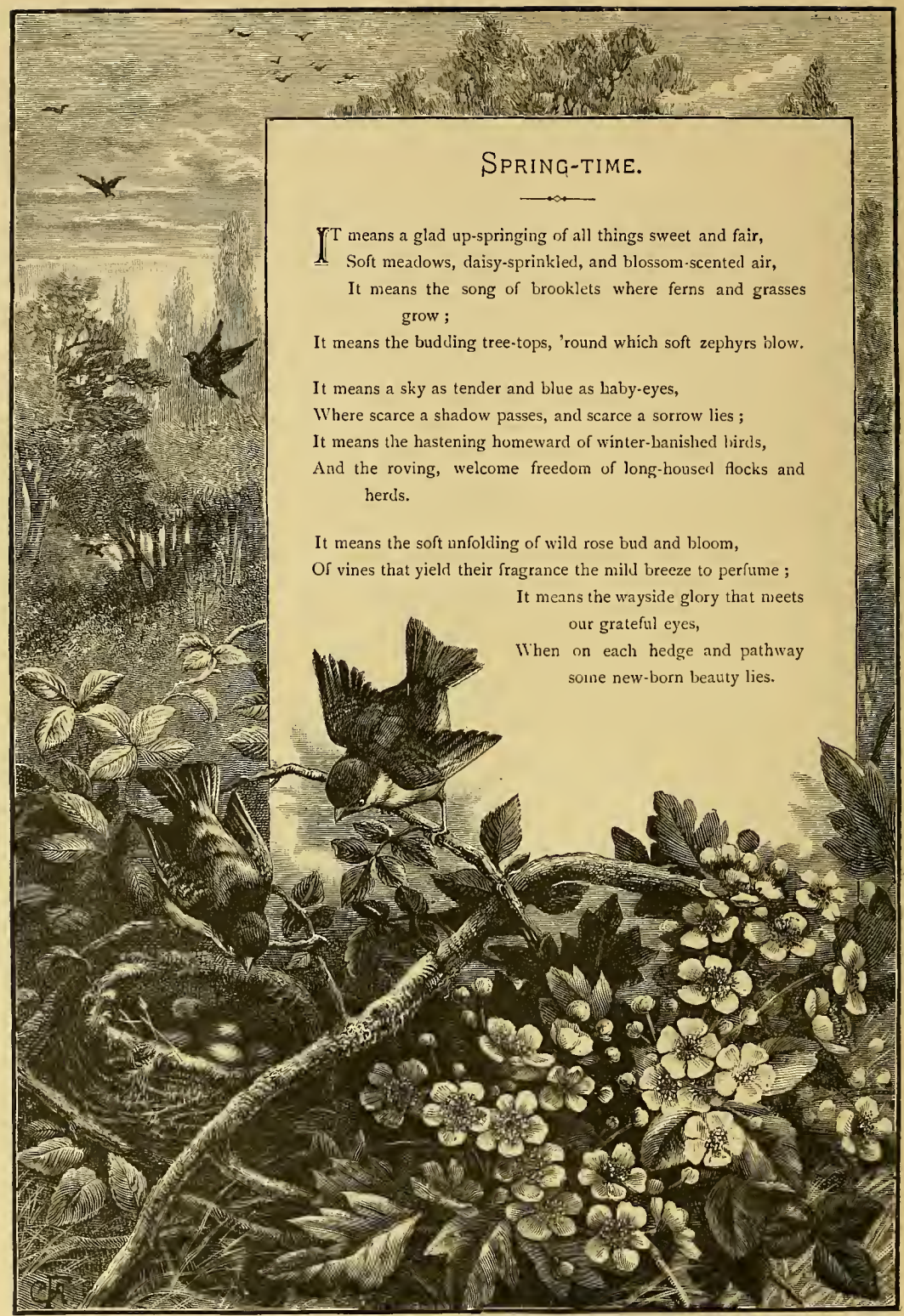
The Sweet June Time.

THE daisies and the buttercups
Now merrily are growing,
And everywhere for June's sweet sake
Are crimson roses blowing.
The sunbeams o'er the meadows lie,
And zephyrs light are straying;
And, oh! 'tis time that school was done,
And children—out a-playing.

Come, little folks—the fields and lanes
Are lonely now without you !
The birds are all in tune to sing
Their sweetest songs about you.
The old barn doors stand open wide,
The brooks with fish are teeming ;
And over hill, and dale, and lake,
Dame Nature's smiles are beaming.

Come, one and all, from far and near,
And sound the summer's praises,
Whilst racing through the clover fields,
And nestling 'mid the daisies.
Make wreaths of roses crimson-red,
Your bright young heads adorning,
For summer-time was made for you,
And June is summer's morning !

"Vacation is the time for fun !"
All girls and boys are saying,
When school and books grow wearisome,
And hearts are ripe for playing.
So, little folks, come, one and all,
And tumble out together,
Amid the sunbeams' golden light,
All in the sweet June weather.



Spring-time.

IT means a glad up-springing of all things sweet and fair,
Soft meadows, daisy-sprinkled, and blossom-scented air,
It means the song of brooklets where ferns and grasses grow;
It means the budding tree-tops, 'round which soft zephyrs blow.

It means a sky as tender and blue as baby-eyes,
Where scarce a shadow passes, and scarce a sorrow lies;
It means the hastening homeward of winter-banished birds,
And the roving, welcome freedom of long-housed flocks and herds.

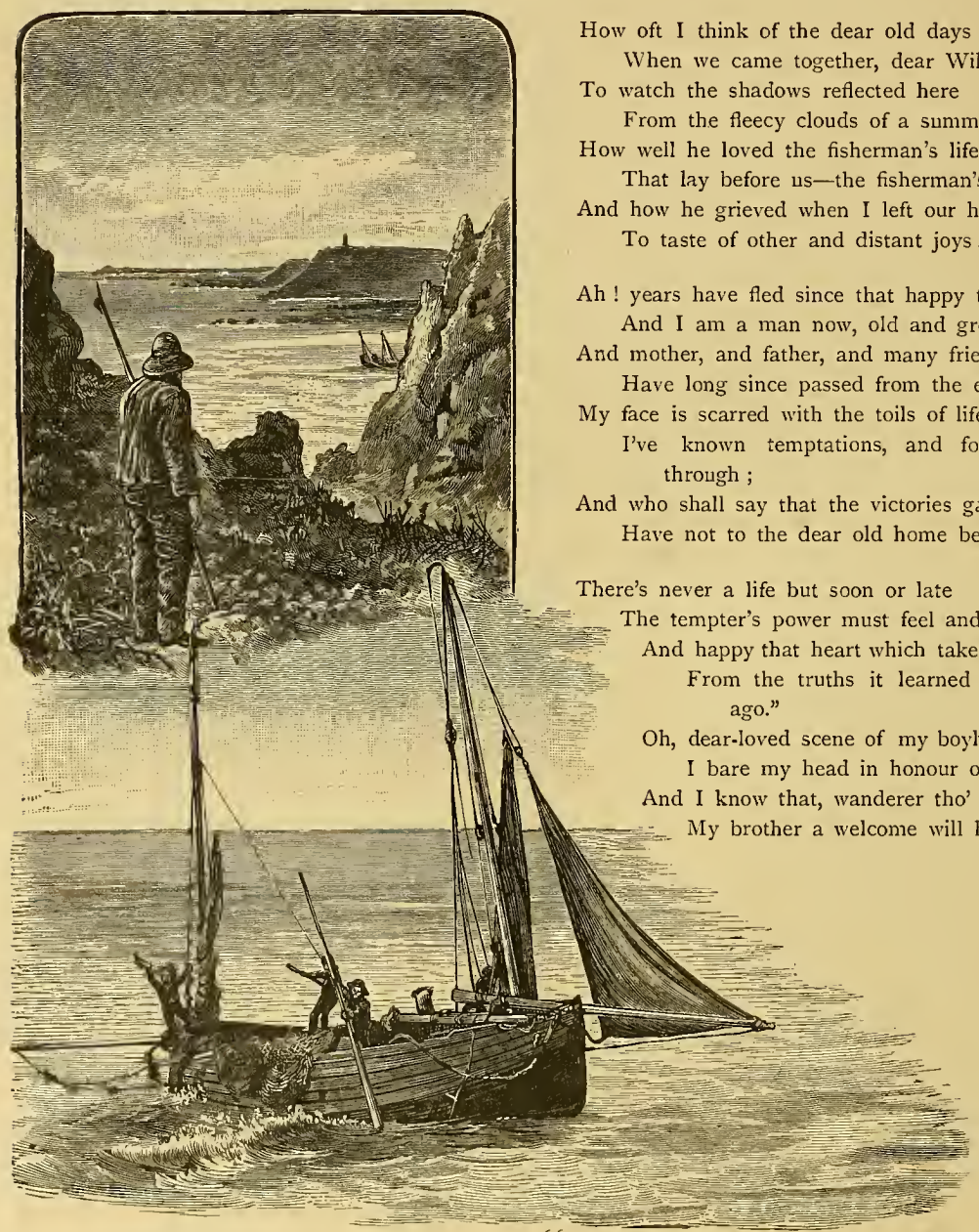
It means the soft unfolding of wild rose bud and bloom,
Of vines that yield their fragrance the mild breeze to perfume;
It means the wayside glory that meets our grateful eyes,
When on each hedge and pathway some new-born beauty lies.

It means a time of singing for joy that winter's o'er ;
It means the welcome dawning of Summer's joys
once more ;
It means all things delicious, some new delight each
day ;
It is the earth's glad Easter, its *Lenten* passed
away.

My Boyhood's Home.

So near the scene of my boyhood's home!
Ah! were I still but the merry boy
Whose careless life on the dear old spot
Was ever content and full of joy!

There I roamed at will o'er the meadows green,
And stood at a tender mother's knee,
And played with the brother whose fresh young heart
Was big with the love it held for me.



How oft I think of the dear old days
When we came together, dear Will and I,
To watch the shadows reflected here
From the fleecy clouds of a summer sky!
How well he loved the fisherman's life
That lay before us—the fisherman's boys!
And how he grieved when I left our home
To taste of other and distant joys!

Ah! years have fled since that happy time,
And I am a man now, old and grey;
And mother, and father, and many friends
Have long since passed from the earth away.
My face is scarred with the toils of life,
I've known temptations, and fought them through;
And who shall say that the victories gained
Have not to the dear old home been due?

There's never a life but soon or late
The tempter's power must feel and know,
And happy that heart which takes its strength
From the truths it learned in the "long ago."
Oh, dear-loved scene of my boyhood's home!
I bare my head in honour of thee;
And I know that, wanderer tho' I am,
My brother a welcome will have for me!

The Song of the Sportsman.

LET who will sing of summer with its skies so soft and blue,
To the merry, brown old autumn the sportsman's heart is true;
Then we listen to the crack of our rifles sharp and clear,
And we bag our game all quickly with a ringing shout and cheer.

Oh! the hill-side, it is golden; and like the sunlit seas
Are the fields of yellow corn as they rustle in the breeze;
And the river gleams like silver beneath the autumn sky,
And o'er its rippling bosom, see! the wild ducks flap and fly.

From the gorgeous-hued old forest comes the pipe of many a bird,
And the marshes with the rustle of the shy reed-birds are stirred.
And heavily come homeward the laden harvest wains,
And the farmer's heart is merry as he views his harvest gains.

Oh! there's much to say good-bye to when summer goes away—
The sweet, soft time of summer, that cannot always stay;
But there's much, so much to welcome with the ripe September days,
And the earth grows fuller—richer in October's golden haze.

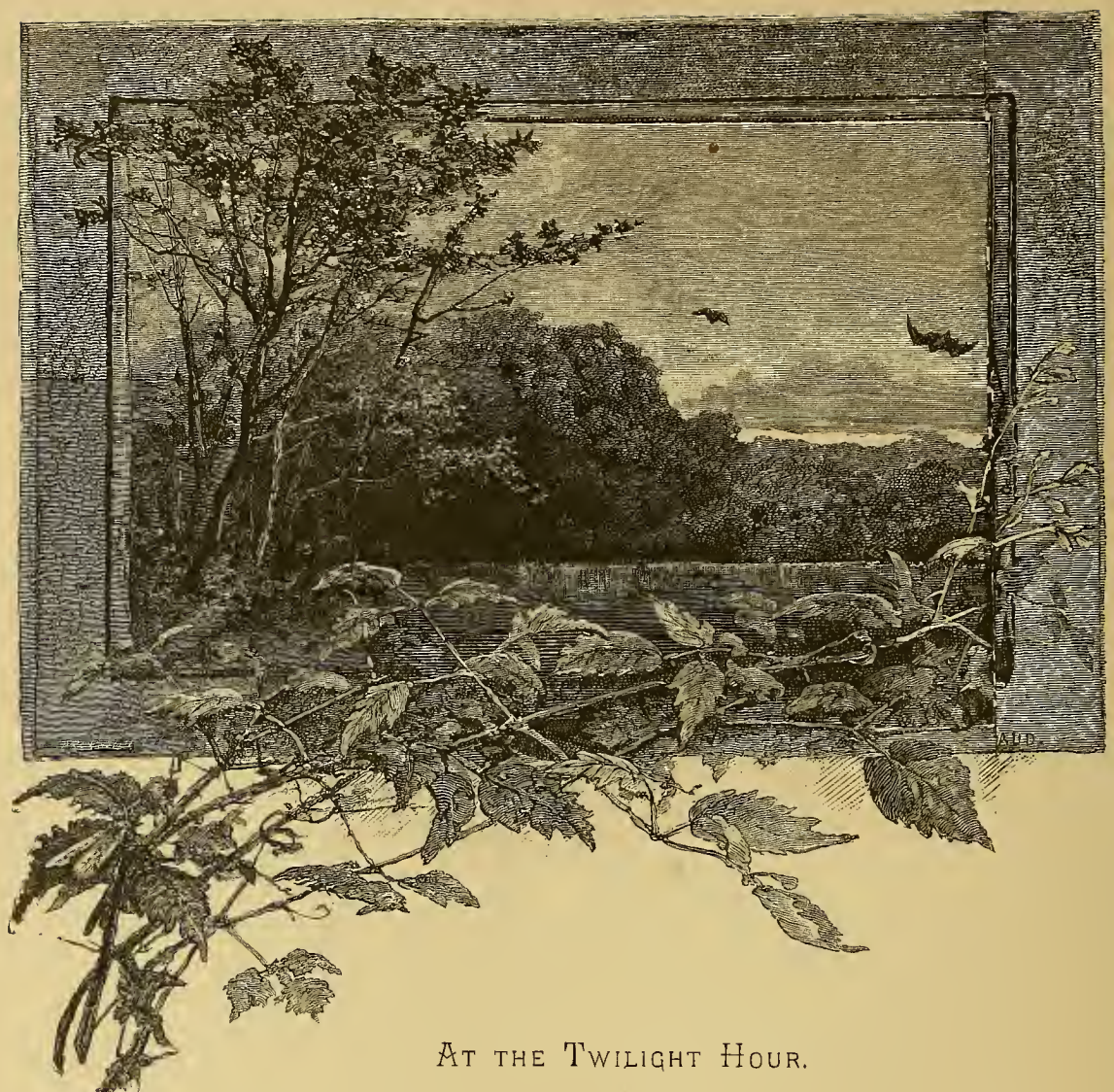
Then, ho! brothers, let us sing of the days to us so dear;
Let us say good-bye to summer, let us welcome autumn here.
Bring your rifles and your pouches, and to the lake-side hie,
For there's game upon the wing, my lads, and sunshine in the sky!

The Noon Recess.

OH! how the merry laugh and shout
Of happy little folks ring out
Upon the soft and balmy air,
Sending sweet echoes everywhere!
Who but the children can express
Half the delights of "Noon Recess"?
When from the books and study free,
Their little hearts o'erfull of glee,
No rule may meddle with the fun,
That's all their own—from twelve to one!

Alas! for little lad or lass
To whom it may have come to pass
That naughtiness has brought about
No right to join in "laugh and shout;"
Who all this recess hour must spend
On study bench without a friend,
While on the angry little face
The scowls and tears leave many a trace:
Poor little captive! noon recess
Has lost all charms—you will confess.

Ah! well, this life is but a school,
Where we must yield to rod and rule.
By some mysterious, stronger power
We sometimes lose our recess hour.
But even so, if loss of "fun"
Should mark some needed victory won,
The discipline must in the end
Prove to have been our wisest friend:
And when our recess hour we earn,
With added zeal to it we turn.



At the Twilight Hour.

A SOFT, sweet fragrance in the air
Of dew-wet flowers. Everywhere
A tender, restful silence lies,
Born of the misty, distant skies;
Whence twilight shadows slowly fall,
Like gauzy curtains, over all.
The meadows stretch so mistily,
Far as my longing eyes can see;
And yonder forest hides away
In its own darkness from the day;
And tinkling cow-bells ring in time
To yonder streamlet's slumbrous chime;
And o'er sweet Nature's paling face
Night letteth down her veil apace.

In the Park.

"A THING of beauty is a joy for ever!" so they say;
And what more lovely than a park upon a summer's day,
With green above, and green below, and sunshine over all,
And merry birds that chirp, and sing, and to each other call?
But better far the deep, wide woods, where *man* has laid no hand,
And where the grandeur so sublime by God's own skill was planned.

Why the Daisies are White.

ONCE on a time a quarrel rose,
'Tis said, between impatient Spring
And that old Greybeard Winter, who
Yet longer to his throne would cling.
"My turn it is," quoth Mistress Spring,
"To reign, and clothe the earth anew.
How long must all my beauties lie
Concealed, for fear of such as you?"

Then to the sunbeams, coaxingly,
She turned and said, "To you alone
I look for help earth's chains to loose,
And drive this loiterer from the throne."
So, tempted by her smiling face,
The sunbeams answered to her call,
And tho' old Winter battled well,
His kingdom soon began to fall.

"But if you think," he coldly said,
"All trace of me to wipe away,
My memory still shall haunt and lie
Upon your meadows day by day."
And on that night a messenger
By Winter sent to Daisyland—
Upon each daisy blossom laid
A sheet of snow with lavish hand.

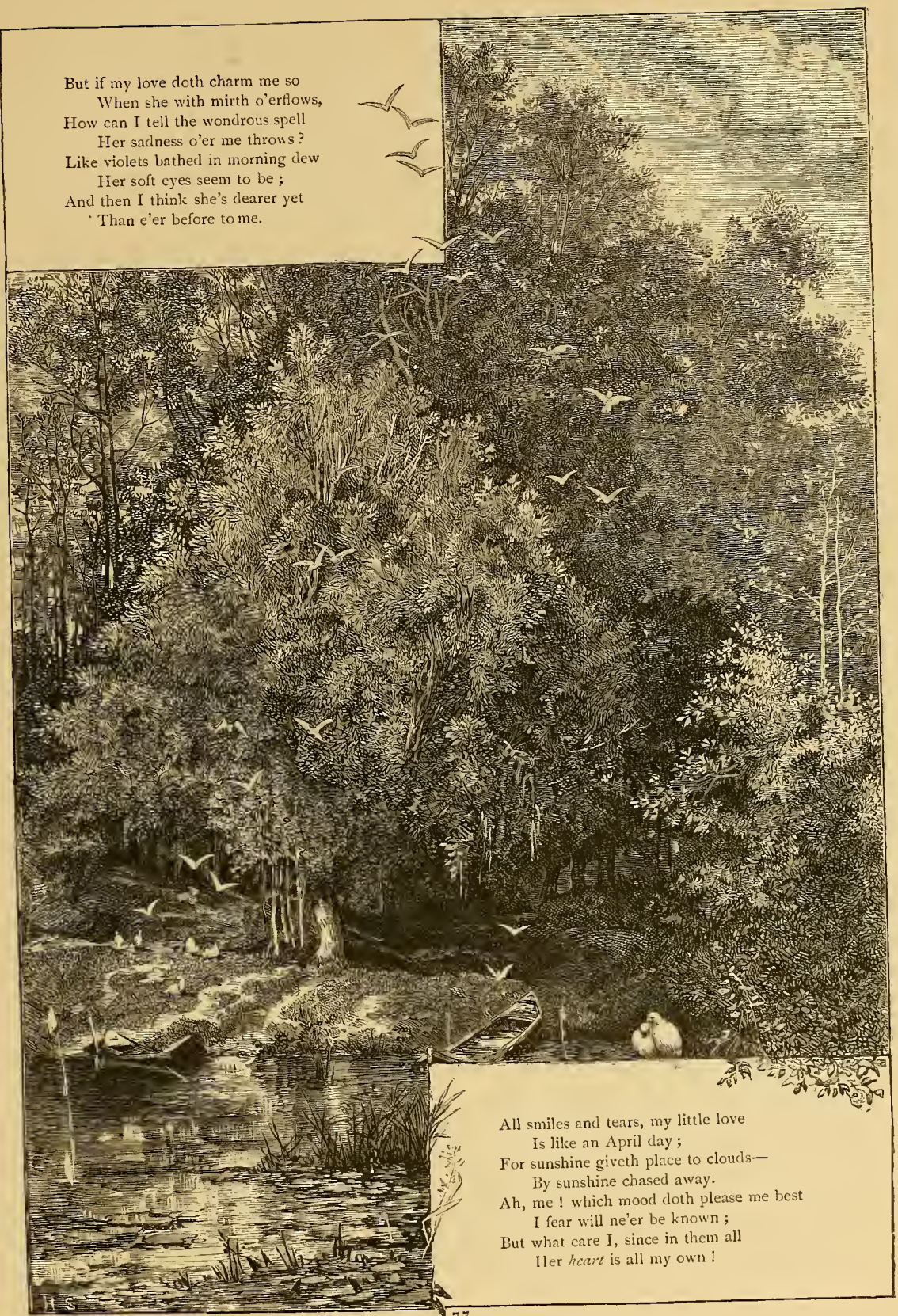
And Mistress Spring, when she beheld
The souvenir of Winter's reign,
Smiled, as she softly kissed her pets,
And foiled his purpose once again.
For in the heart of each white flower
She laid a bit of golden sun;
And bade it nestle closely there
Until sweet daisy-life were done.

And thus the fair field flower grew:
Spring's golden sunshine, warm and bright,
At rest for ever in its heart,
The while its leaves, like snow, are white.

My April Love.

AN April maiden is my love,
So full of moods is she,
I hardly know, to tell the truth,
Which mood most pleaseth me.
Her smiles are as bewildering
As April's sunniest day;
So tender, I am fain to wish
They ne'er might pass away.

But if my love doth charm me so
When she with mirth o'erflows,
How can I tell the wondrous spell
Her sadness o'er me throws?
Like violets bathed in morning dew
Her soft eyes seem to be;
And then I think she's dearer yet
Than e'er before to me.



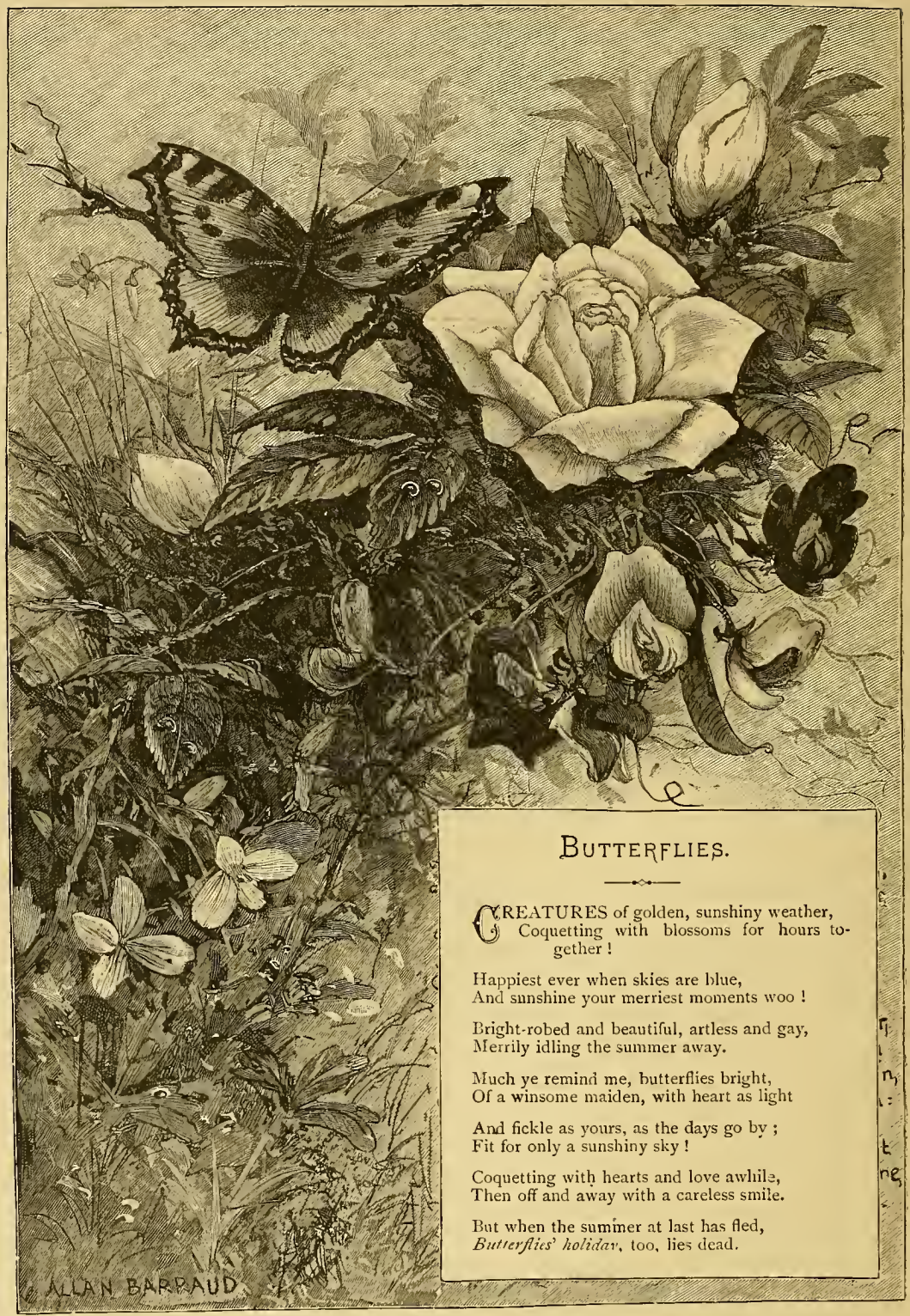
All smiles and tears, my little love
Is like an April day;
For sunshine giveth place to clouds—
By sunshine chased away.
Ah, me! which mood doth please me best
I fear will ne'er be known;
But what care I, since in them all
Her *heart* is all my own!

Out on the Sands.

OUT on the sands we walked—three friends—
To watch the sea-gulls dipping low,
While gently murmuring at our feet
The waters rippled to and fro;
And merrily and happily
We watched the white waves come and go.

But one of us was very fair;
Alas! I knew it was not I.
My heart sank low, but I was brave
To watch his face when she was by,
Where all too well, with tender spell,
Love wrote its own tale silently.

And so at last I left them there,
And all unheeded came away,
And from our gay companions hid
The lesson I had learned that day.
My dream was o'er, with Love no more
I watched the rippling waters play.



BUTTERFLIES.

CREATURES of golden, sunshiny weather,
Coquetting with blossoms for hours together!

Happiest ever when skies are blue,
And sunshine your merriest moments woo!

Bright-robed and beautiful, artless and gay,
Merrily idling the summer away.

Much ye remind me, butterflies bright,
Of a winsome maiden, with heart as light

And fickle as yours, as the days go by;
Fit for only a sunshiny sky!

Coquetting with hearts and love awhile,
Then off and away with a careless smile.

But when the summer at last has fled,
Butterflies' holiday, too, lies dead.

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